PAGANISM

AND

CHRISTIANITY

COMPARED.

IN A COURSE OF LECTURES
TO THE KING'S SCHOLARS, AT WESTMINSTER,
IN THE YEARS 1806-7-8.

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PREFACE.

THE preparation of the following course of Lectures devolved on me by an accident, with which it is not necessary to trouble the Reader. Whether the performance be entitled to any degree of public esteem, must be left to the determination of others. For the motives which suggested it, I can decidedly answer. I was desirous of being useful to the Institution which I was called to serve; of shewing a mark of attachment to the Church to which I have the honour to belong; and of presenting to the Young Men, whom it became my province to instruct, something which might tend to the formation of the CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR.

But, unacquainted with the mode of address which my office might require, it was necessary to obtain some better direction. On such an occasion, it was impossible to apply to an higher

authority than the DEAN of Westminster. With that attachment to the welfare of the School, which so strongly marks Dr. VINCENT, he entered into my wishes, and described what would be most calculated to fix attention and do good. History, literature, occasional criticism, were desirable for the first purpose; and the second would be answered, if these were united with Religion.

In conformity with these suggestions, was planned the following composition. As it advanced, a large portion of it was submitted to his private inspection. He has uniformly encouraged me to proceed, by contributing his advice, and the benefit of his occasional remarks; and when at length a determination was taken to print the Lectures, he signified his cordial concurrence and approbation, in terms too flattering to me to be repeated to the Public.

The subject is chiefly historical, and divides itself into two parts. The event which serves as the foundation of the whole, is the capture of Rome by Alaric, in the beginning of the fifth century. Out of this arises, in the first part, a defence of the Character of the Church against the slanders of Paganism. The true causes of the decay of the Empire are contrasted with the

false; the impotence of the Heathen deities, to whom the prosperity of Rome had been attributed, is exposed in the arguments employed by the ancient apologists of the Faith; and the beneficial tendency of the Gospel is asserted, in its connection with the condition of Man in the present life. This part may therefore be called a Vindication of the civil Character of Christianity in the Roman empire, during the first four centuries.

The second part is employed in discussing the opinions of the Pagans concerning the Worship of a Deity, and the pursuit of Happiness, as it was prescribed by the Philosophical sects. It may be termed a view of mythological and moral notions, as they are opposed to the everlasting promises of the Gospel; and it contains an examination of some of the more eminent Systems of Theology, and the Summum Bonum, which prevailed in the Heathen world.*

* In some parts of this examination, I have crossed the path of Leland. But whoever will take the trouble of a comparison, will soon be satisfied that our methods are very different. I am happy, indeed, in agreeing with that excellent man in his fundamental principle of the superiority of Revelation to all the efforts of natural wisdom; and the necessity of it to the welfare of mankind. His style wants compression

With these are interwoven occasional appeals to the superior doctrines of the Scriptures; and to this purpose is also dedicated the first, or introductory, chapter; which presents a general statement of the blessings annexed to the sincere profession of Christianity, in the "life which now is, and in that which is to come."

Some perhaps may wish, that a larger and more regular plan of Revelation had been prepared, in contrast with the vain search after God and Happiness by the efforts of Philosophy. This indeed was once intended. But, on a revision, it appeared, that many notices, tending to this purpose, were interspersed through the body of the work, as immediate correctives of the Heathen doctrines which had been described in the lectures of each term; that, to remove them from their present places, would be injurious to the subjects amidst which they stand; and that, to repeat them in a general statement, would be tedious and superfluous.

and force; his taste is not delicate; and he appears to me to employ several of his quotations in a manner which betrays too much dependence upon the collections of others. But his views are generally accurate; his learning is respectable; and his genuine piety throws a sacred charm over all his other attainments.

However, lest it should still be objected, that only half my task is accomplished, and that the refutation of Paganism is not the proof of Revelation;—nè quisquam nos aliena tantùm redarguisse, non autem nostra asseruisse reprehendat;* a determination has been already taken to begin another course of Lectures which shall look to this as their principal object; describe, in a regular manner, the scheme of Revelation; and impress more fully on the young hearers its doctrines and its duties.

It is hoped that this will be accepted as an apology for the attempt which has been made in the subject now presented to the public. There are, however, certain classes of persons, to whom this mode of treating it may be in want of farther vindication.

The fanatic, a portion of whose spirit has been lately reviving amongst us, seems to value religion, in proportion to the ruggedness of its appearance. He indulges his own barbarous and repulsive jargon, and rejects the assistance of profane learning, as if it tended to impair the character of Evangelical truth. To him I would suggest, that he entirely mistakes the

* August. Retract. lib. ii. c. 43.

nature and influence of that literature which is taught in our schools. Our faith is not injured by the accession of classical taste. Mythology neither taints the purity of the Gospel, nor endangers our salvation. Indeed, it suggests new methods of defending Revelation, the superiority of which is rightly inferred from an exposure of the weakness of the religion of nature. We dwell for a while in classic ground. In our more mature judgment, we compare the imaginations of men with Divine truth. We turn our collections to Christian profit, and offer the fruits of our studies on the altar of God.

On the other hand, the too fastidious scholar would for ever confine his attention to those writings which exhibit the purest classical language. He turns, therefore, with disgust and disdain from ruder models, and shuns the less polished phraseology of declining taste. This is an antient feeling. Eusebius mentions a report concerning Tatian, that his literary nicety led him to correct the compositions of St. Paul.* And when the eloquent Triphyllius was re-

* Τῷ δὲ ἀποστόλῳ φασὶ τολμῆσαι τινὰς αὐτὸν μεταφράσαι φωνὰς, ὡς ἐπιδιορθούμενον αὐτων τὴν τῆς φράσεως σύνταξιν. Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 29.

quested to preach on a solemn occasion, and had chosen one of the miracles of Christ for his subject, he altered a term in his text which appeared too homely for his use.*

Something may be pardoned to those, who, in an early age of the Church, had to surrender the prejudices of an Heathen education, and the philosophy in which they were bred. They lingered for a while within the borders of the schools, and their opinions concerning the doctrines of the Gospel were sometimes marked with errors and imperfections, which the charity of criticism will readily excuse. The same indulgence, however, cannot be extended to the scholar of the present day: to him we must urge the sacred nature of Ecclesiastical truth, and the duty of pursuing it wherever it may be found;—the peculiar interest which attends the warfare of the Church with the early race of infidels, and its importance to the history of our Faith. We may also urge, in favour of the Christian writers, that, at the least, they are as wor-

* Cùm in solenni Episcoporum conventu rogatus esset Triphyllius ut ad populum concionem haberet, et dictum illud Salvatoris in medium proferret, Ἄρον σῦ τὸ κράββατον καὶ περιπάτει, vice τῦ κραββάτυ, quasi vocabuli minùs elegantis, Σκίμποδα substituit. Cave, Hist. Litt. in voc. Triph.

thy of perusal, for the sake of style alone, as the Pagan authors who, in the same age, opposed the Gospel. Perhaps no literary specimen can be produced from Heathenism, of so humble a cast as the instructions of Commodianus. But Hermias is as neat as Lucian.* Symmachus is surpassed by Ambrose. Lactantius writes with far more taste and elegance than Am. Marcellinus; and in his own times, whatever be his defects, Augustin is without a rival. After the revival of literature, much narrowness prevailed on this subject, and the captious critic was ready to prove the force of his taste by snarling at the latinity of the antients themselves.† But sober learning, and sound piety, triumphed over the efforts of spleen and affectation; nor ought we to acquiesce in any attempt to revive a spirit, which, while it professes an extraordinary reverence for letters, tends to circumscribe their influence, undervalues the materials of Ecclesiastical History, and sacrifices truth to sound.

* See the concluding note to chap. 7.

† De summorum virorum laudibus ob unam alterámque vocem minùs puram, adeò detractâsse constat, ut GRAMMATICI CANIS nomen communi suffragio retulerit (Scioppius). Mosheim. Preface to Folieta.

It only remains to mention the statute which appoints the Lecturer in Theology; to explain the reasons on which the present course has been prepared, and to state what has been offered to the public by my predecessors in this office.

"Est illud in omni re atque negotio quò omnes actiones nostræ consiliáque spectare debent, ut Omnipotentis Dei regnum quæratur, hominum mentes rectè instituantur et informentur, omnésque ad veram salutis cognitionem perveniant, quæ non aliunde quàm ex verbo Dei haurienda petendáque est. Proindè statuimus et ordinamus ut sit in Ecclesiâ nostrâ prædictâ Theologiæ Lector per Decanum et Capitulum eligendus, qui sit sanctæ et orthodoxæ Fidei, bonæ famæ, et ab omni non solùm hæresi, sed hæreseôs etiam suspicione alienus; nec doctus modò et eruditus, sed Doctrinæ prætereà titulo insignitus, hoc est, Sacræ Theologiæ Professor Baccalaureúsve, aut saltem in Artibus Magister. Lectoris munus et officium erit Sacram Scripturam ad plebis et auditorum ædificationem, modo et tempore in Statuto de cultu Dei inferiùs præscriptis, linguâ vernaculâ, in Choro Ecclesiæ nostræ, interpretari; cujus Lectionibus intersint administri et pau-

peres, presbyteri, clerici cæterique Ecclesiæ sub pœnâ pecuniariâ judicio Decani aut Prodecani infligendâ."

If it should be objected, that the following Lectures are not prepared with the simplicity supposed by the Statute, the only answer is, that I have acted according to circumstances. At present, there is no audience except the school. To young men therefore, in a train of education for the Universities, the Lecturer is at liberty to address himself in a literary manner, and to recommend a religious subject by the attractions of their scholastic studies. If it should be said that much of the subject is beyond the present powers of the young men, I would suggest, that their capacity is greater than the objection supposes; and that, upon a private inquiry concerning their comprehension of the argument, the result, generally speaking, has been satisfactory. Perhaps a few points have been less obvious than others; and this may be supposed chiefly of the doctrines of the Platonic school, discussed in the sixth and seventh chapters. But in an extensive subject, all the parts will not be alike; and some may be so abstruse or complicated in their nature, as to bid defiance to the simplification which is demanded.

Into others, by way of compensation, I have thrown as much amusement as was consistent with the nature of my subject; and some readers perhaps may accuse me of having occasionally indulged too light a vein of narration and argument.

The Institution has produced few printed works.—In 1749, Dr. Heylin published his Interpretation of the Four Gospels, with Lectures on select parts of St. Matthew. The book is well known, and maintains its place in Ecclesiastical collections. In 1785, appeared the Lectures of Dr. John Blair on the Canon of the Scriptures; a work creditable to the ability of the writer, though certainly not calculated to attract much attention from a youthful audience. The subject is not complete; and the volume was published by his family, after his death. I am not acquainted with any other publication. What rank may be assigned to the present volume by some succeeding Lecturer, I know not. I would only beg to suggest to him, that it was produced amidst the calls of other business; that I am engaged in the discharge of professional duties, in a large and populous parish;* and that the Lectures were

* Croydon in Surrey.

prepared, from time to time, as the intervals of local employments allowed, or as the approach of Term compelled me.

Such as the work is, I offer it to the School, with a zealous attachment to its welfare, a sincere admiration of its literature and discipline, and a fervent prayer that it may always preserve the union of Religion and Learning.

WESTMINSTER,
February 1st, 1809.

PREFACE

TO THE NEW EDITION.

IN the original Preface it was stated, that the preparation of this work devolved on me by an "accident," with which it was not then deemed necessary to trouble the reader. At present, however, when the controversy concerning the state of religious instruction, in our great public schools, appears to be at rest,—when some of the combatants are in their graves,—and when the angry feelings of the survivors, it may be hoped, are calmed by time and more mature reflection, it may be allowed me to say, that the following course of Lectures sprung from that controversy.

It is well known, that Dr. Vincent undertook to vindicate the character of the school of Westminster, and incidentally, of the other great schools of England, against certain writers, who

had stigmatised them, as conducted without Christian principles, and on a system which might almost be called exclusively Pagan. While society yet resounded with this warfare, I became acquainted with him, having succeeded him in his Prebendal stall, in the year 1802, when he was raised to the Deanery of Westminster. Not long after this, with an express reference to the recent controversy, he opened his mind to me concerning the theological Lecture founded in the Church of Westminster by the Statutes of Queen Elizabeth. His earnest desire was, to support the honour of the foundation, and to offer to the school a course of Lectures which should unite the attractions of Literature with the principles and feelings of Christianity; and he informed me, that the office of Lecturer would be vacant for me, as soon as I should consent to accept it. For a while, I endeavoured to excuse myself, engaged as I was in the service of a very large and populous parish. He returned however to the subject, and urged his wishes with increased earnestness. By this time, his frank disposition and honesty of mind had begun to excite in me a feeling of sincere friendship towards him. It gave me pain to continue the refusal of his re-

peated requests in such a cause; and under the united influence of a personal regard for himself, and a duty to the establishment to which I belonged, I finally acquiesced. After some deliberation on a proper subject, I began a course of Lectures, which did not terminate with those that are contained in the present volume, and were first printed in 1809, but extended to another and larger subject, and was not finally dropped till the summer of the year 1812.

Such were the motives which led to the formation of the present volume. Whether these details have any interest for the general reader, I know not. To myself, at least, they are pleasing, as they bring to my recollection a long and happy intercourse with a person whom I so much esteemed, and exhibit him acting under the influence of an honourable anxiety for the establishment over which he then presided, and in the service of which he had passed the chief part of his life. To those perhaps who wish to trace the origin of any literary attempt, it may not be unacceptable to observe, how great is the effect of the kindly feelings of the heart. While the cold, the selfish, and ungenerous temper damps all ardour, and discou-

rages all exertion, the more open and attractive disposition inspires confidence, and is able to excite even the doubtful to action.

If it is inquired, why the present Edition is offered to the public, the answer is plain. Application having been made to Mr. Murray for a copy of the Lectures, his reply was, that "not a single one was left." This led to other questions; and he farther informs me, that, for some time past, more inquiry than usual has been made for the Volume, and that it might be useful to reprint it. Such a statement was sufficient to persuade me to a new Edition.

As to the favour thus shewn to the volume, it can be attributed only to the happy influence which Religion has lately acquired in society, and which now displays itself more openly in our literature. It is of peculiar importance, that this union of sacred and secular knowledge should not only grow in our public schools, but receive the full sanction of our Universities. Oxford already acts on the principle, that a knowledge of the Gospel shall be an indispensable qualification for the first degree, and that no other acquirements, in literature or science, shall be deemed to compensate for the want of it. A grateful

nation acknowledges the salutary effects of this high principle; and we pray for the divine blessing on all the studies of a place, which makes Religion its primary attainment, and solemnly proclaims, that the admission to the temple of its honours shall be only through the portal of the Church of Christ.—Gifted and honoured seat!—"Excellent things are spoken of thee." Thou hast dedicated thyself to God. On the "forefront" of thy Diadem thou hast engraven "HOLINESS TO THE LORD."* Pursue thy great career! accomplish the benefits which Providence calls thee to administer; and receive the blessings of a world, at once enlightened and sanctified by thy cares!

With this tribute of feeling I would willingly end; but to a numerous class of inquirers I am bound to give an explicit account of the result of the promise which was made in the Preface to the first Edition. It was there said, "a de-
"termination has been already taken to begin
"another course of Lectures, which shall de-
"scribe, in a regular manner, the scheme of
"Revelation, and impress more fully on the
"young hearers, its doctrines and its duties."

* Exod. xxxix. 30. Lev. viii. 9.

This promise was performed. I have already intimated, that my services did not terminate when the present Volume first appeared, but were continued till the year 1812. The subject of the second course of Lectures was, "The History and Principles of Revelation." It forms a much larger work than the present Volume. However, I had never promised to print it, as has been kindly supposed. The pledge given was only, that I would describe the scheme of Revelation, for the benefit of the school; and this pledge, as I have said, was redeemed. Whether the second work should follow the original Volume to the press, was to be left entirely to circumstances. And unfortunately for its farther progress, about the time mentioned, some private events occurred which severely affected my mind and health, and took from me all inclination, while their influence lasted, to continue my theological labours at Westminster, or to accept the office of Professor of Divinity at Oxford, which was offered to me in the year 1813, when Dr. Howley was promoted from thence to the see of London. The Lectures in question remain therefore as they dropped from my hands at that moment.

What has been stated will be sufficient per-

haps to account for the re-appearance of the Volume first published in 1809. Since that time, what an unexpected event has happened to myself! I date this second Preface from the House to which my excellent Predecessor once invited me for the purpose of obtaining my promise of the original work! I cannot express the gratitude which I must always feel for the honour thus conferred on me by the Royal condescension. What remains of my Life will be dedicated to the watchful care of an establishment, over which I am appointed to preside; and when that last moment comes,—which cannot be very distant,—I can only pray, that a successor may be selected, whose zeal and qualifications may repair any defect or error, from which the foundation may have suffered, during my superintendance, either in its temporal concerns, or its sacred services.

DEANERY, WESTMINSTER,
April 7th, 1825.

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PAGANISM

AND

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COMPARED.

CHAPTER I.

PROMISES OF THE GOSPEL...PERSECUTION OF IT BY ROMANS, GREEKS, AND JEWS...FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS...PARALLEL FROM OUR REFORMATION...GENERAL HAPPINESS OF BELIEVERS...RIVAL PRETENSIONS OF PAGANISM.

ST. PAUL has affirmed concerning the godliness of which he was an inspired teacher, that it "is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."* His immediate intention was to refute an erroneous notion, whether ascribed to certain heretics of the early ages, or more prospectively to the Romish Church,

* 1 Ep. Tim. ch. iv. ver. 8.

that the profession of the faith of Christ was incompatible with the usual connections and supports of common life. But his declaration extends beyond the controversy itself, and asserts, in universal terms, the happy condition of believers under the Gospel. The "bodily exercises," the unbidden austerities and mortifications, against which he argues, have little influence in promoting the welfare of man:—but true Christianity comprehends all good. It unites the blessings of this world and the next. In the present life it allows to us whatever can be desired with innocence, or used with thanksgiving to God; and in the life to come, it offers that transcendent happiness which is promised, in a more eminent manner, through Jesus Christ. In this sense the passage is interpreted by Vatablus, "Iis, qui pium Dei cultum amplexi fuerint, promittitur hic vita diutina et beata, et tandem æterna."*

It is impossible not to be struck with admiration, when we consider this assertion, and compare it with the outward circumstances of the Christian church in the age in

* Crit. Sacr. in loc.

which the apostle wrote. The Saviour had prepared the minds of his disciples for the trials which awaited them in the execution of their sacred commission—"Behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves;"* and those who conspire to hinder the propagation of your doctrine, "will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles; and ye shall be hated of all men for my sake."†

These denunciations were dreadfully verified. Disastrous indeed was the condition of the Gospel, not only while it was confined within the borders of Judæa and Samaria, but after it was announced to the world at large. The propagators of the faith had to make the melancholy confession, that distresses of every kind were prepared for them by the ready malice of their enemies. They were openly punished, and privately defamed. They suffered both "hunger and thirst, were naked and buffeted, and had no certain

* Luke x. 3. † St. Matt. x. 17, 18.

dwelling-place."* For himself in particular, St. Paul states his more abundant labours, his frequent imprisonments, his various and unceasing perils by sea and land, from his own countrymen and from the heathen,† and the "bonds and afflictions which awaited him in every city."‡ Yet amid circumstances so unusually discouraging arose the steady assertion of the apostle; and the Gospel, thus persecuted and apparently forlorn, was still declared to have the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come!

Let us extend this view beyond the limits of the apostolic age, and follow the Gospel in its afflictions and its joys, its persecutions and its determined triumphs. The continued sufferings of the propagators of the faith are abundantly proved in the descriptions which other writers have given us of the hostile conduct of the Gentiles and Jews. In the early defences of Christianity, nothing is more frequent than the complaint, that the mere confession of the faith was deemed sufficient ground of condemnation by the heathen tribunals.

* 1 Cor. iv. 11. † 2 Cor. xi. 26. ‡ Acts xx. 23.

Justin Martyr, in his first apology,* relates the cases of those who were summarily punished on this account, and the conversations which were held concerning them in the Roman courts of justice. Ptolemæus, a convert, had been seized and thrown into prison, upon information that he was a Christian. When he was brought before Urbicius, the præfect of the city, the only question asked of him was, whether he professed the faith of Christ?† This being acknowledged, he was instantly ordered to be led away to death. Among those who stood by, was Lucius, another convert, who, in the boldness of innocence, asked the præfect, on what grounds he condemned a man proved guilty of no crime. Art thou also a Christian? demanded Urbicius. This was not denied;

* I quote it as it is commonly printed, and as it appears in the edition which I use; Frankfort, 1686. Perhaps, it was only an appendix to the first; and in this case it was addressed chiefly to Antoninus Pius. If it be a second apology, the emperor is Marcus Antoninus. After having maintained the latter opinion, Grabe appeared to be persuaded that the piece in question is rather an appendix than a separate work.

† Τοῦτο μόνον ἐξητάσθη, εἰ εἴη Χριστιανός;—Ib. p. 42.

and the same punishment was adjudged to both.*

In the time of Tertullian, no farther attention seems to have been expected by the Christians from the heathen tribunals. He opens his spirited and argumentative apology with the declaration that the door of justice was shut to the cause of Christianity alone; and therefore nothing but the testimony of private writing remained for those who were not allowed to be heard in their defence.†

While these advocates of the faith justly demand, that their lives and characters be made the subjects of enquiry, before sentence is passed upon them; they boldly declare, that they refuse not to die, if wickedness be proved against them; and they complain with

* Λόκιός τις, καὶ ἀντὸς ὢν Χριστιανὸς, ὁρῶν τὴν ἀλόγως ὅτως γενομένην κρίσιν, πρὸς τὸν Ὀυρβίκιον ἔφη· Τίς ἡ ἀιτία, τῦ μήτε μοιχὸν, μήτε πόρνον, μήτε ἀνδροφόνον, μήτε λωποδύτην, μήτε ἅρπαγα, μήτε ἁπλῶς ἀδίκημά τι πράξαντα ἐλεγχόμενον, ὀνόματος δὲ Χριστιανῦ προσωνυμίαν ὁμολογῦντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῦτον ἐκολάσω;—καὶ ὅς, ὀυδέν ἄλλο ἀποκρινάμενος, καὶ πρὸς τὸν Λόκιον ἔφη, δοκεῖς μοι καὶ σὺ εἶναι τοιῦτος. Καὶ τῦ Λυκίυ φήσαντος, μάλιστα, πάλιν καὶ ἀντὸν ἀπαχθῆναι ἐκέλευσεν.—Ib. p. 43.

† Liceat veritati vel occultâ viâ tacitarum literarum ad aures vestras pervenire.

peculiar force of argument to a Roman ear, that they have not the usual lot of subjects, for whose prosperity the empire professed a common and undiscriminating care. "If we are guilty of any wickedness, (says Athenagoras in his address to the Emperors M. Aurelius and Commodus,) we do not refuse to be punished; nay, we call for the worst of punishment. But if our only guilt be the name of Christians, it is your duty to protect us from the injuries which we suffer."*

Justin Martyr indulges the same complaint in his second apology. "Other men acknowledge what gods they will, and you hinder them not." Then, alluding to the Egyptian worship, always deemed the opprobrium of Paganism, and reprobating the senseless, trifling, and disgusting objects of it, he points out the differences of opinion concerning the

* Καὶ εἰ μέν τις ἡμᾶς ἐλέγχειν ἔχει ἢ μικρὸν ἢ μεῖζον ἀδικοῦντας, κολάζεσθαι ὃ παραιτόμεθα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἥτις πικροτάτη καὶ ἀνηλεής τιμωρία, ὑπέχειν αξιοῦμεν· ἐι δὲ μέχρις ὀνόματος ἡ κατηγορία (ἐις γοῦν τὴν σήμερον ἡμέραν ἃ περὶ ἡμῶν λογοποιοῦσιν, ἡ κοινὴ καὶ ἄκριτος τῶν ἀνθρώπων φήμη· καὶ ὀδεὶς ἀδικῶν Χριστιανὸς ἐλήλεγκται) ὑμῶν ἤδη ἔργον τῶν μεγίστων καὶ φιλανθρώπων καὶ φιλομαθεστάτων βασιλέων, ἀποσκευάσαι ἡμῶν νόμῳ τὴν ἐπήρειαν.—p. 3.

worshippers themselves.* "Yet, even to these sects, bigoted to their several deities, and hostile to each other on their account, you, Romans, shew an equal clemency, and allow their discordant practices. To Christians alone you object, that they worship not the same gods with yourselves; and you devote us to death, because we do not adore dead men, and propitiate them by sacrifices, and garlands placed upon their altars."

The arm of violence, thus uplifted against the followers of Christ, was assisted by the tongue of slander; and every evil was imputed to those, against whom nothing could be proved. To mark this with more horror, their most sacred rites were selected as the objects of the worst of defamation. Not only were the believers accused of atheism, but of

* *Ἄλλων ἀλλαχῇ καὶ δένδρα σεβομένων, καὶ ποταμὰς, καὶ μῦς, καὶ ἀιλόρυς, καὶ κροκοδείλυς, καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων τὰ πολλά· καὶ ὁ τῶν ἀυτῶν ὑπὸ πάντων τιμωμένων, ἄλλα ἄλλων ἀλλαχόσε, ὥς' εἶναι ἀσεβεῖς ἀλλήλοις πάντας διὰ τὸ μὴ τὰ ἀυτὰ σέβειν.* p. 68. Ed. Frankfort. printed as 2d Apology.—If Bishop Warburton had remembered this passage, he would hardly have said, that the quarrel between the Ombites and Tentyrites of Juvenal was not, which of them worshipped a phantom, and which a god, but whose god was the tutelar deity of the place. Div. Leg. B. 2, 6.

the renovation of the cruel feasts of Thyestes, and the indulgence of personal impurity at their religious meetings. It is impossible to read, without emotion, the refutation of these heinous charges in the embassy of Athenagoras. He disproves, at length, and with much animation and dignity, the charge of atheism. The Christian adores a God separate from matter;* and the charge itself seems to have arisen from this circumstance, and the consequent refusal to worship the statues of deified men. He mentions the other imputations with an horror which will not allow so circumstantial a vindication. He justly supposes that the establishment of the first point is sufficient for his purpose. They who believed that none but the pure should see God, could not allow themselves the habits of pollution. They, whose conscience forbade them even to look upon the exhibitions of gladiators, could not be supposed to delight in feasts of human flesh: and the persuasion, that the will of an holy and just

* Ἡμῖν δὲ, διαιρῶσιν ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ δεικνύουσιν ἕτερον μέν τι εἶναι τὴν ὕλην, ἄλλο δὲ τὸν θεὸν—μήτι ἐκ ἀλόγως τὸ τῆς ἀθεότητος ἐπικαλῶσιν ὄνομα.—p. 5.

God ought to be the sole rule of their lives, was an equal security against sensuality and cruelty, the guard not only of their actions, but of their most secret thoughts.* But these accusations were suggested by the grossest ignorance, and the foulest malice. In the first ages of the Gospel, the weekly celebration of the Lord's supper took place in the night; partly through fear of the pagan persecutor,† and partly for the sake of a more strict observance of the time when our Saviour took his last supper with the disciples,‡ before his suffering. This circumstance, together with a perversion of the principal passage in that solemnity, "Take, eat, this is my body;" probably gave rise to the horrid imputation of secret infanticide. Nor is it

* Οἷς ὁ βίος ὡς πρὸς τάθμην τὸν Θεὸν κανονίζεται, ὅπως ἀνυπάστιος καὶ ἀνεπίληπτος ἑκάστυ ἡμων ἄνθρωπος ἀντῳ γενοιτο, ἵτε τότυς μηδ' ἐις ἔννοιαν ποτε τῦ βραχυτάτυ ἐλευσομένυς ἁμαρτήματος.—p. 35.

† This is observed by Origen, in his answer to the first charge of Celsus, that the Christians were fond of nightly meetings—ὑ μάτην τῦτο ποιῦσιν, ἅτε διωθόμενοι τὴν ἐπηρτημένην ἀυτοῖς δίκην τῦ θανάτυ. Lib. 1. p. 5. Ed. Spenc.

‡ Dominica cœna à nostris majoribus eâdem ferè horâ quâ Christus cum discipulis novissimè cœnavit, ex ejus monitis celebrabatur. Not. in Tert. Apol. c. 7. Ed. Basil. 1550.

all creditable to the critical sagacity of the Romish church, to have adopted a literal sense for this passage, and thus to remind us of the strange notion of the Pagans, utterly careless as to the meaning of the religion which they persecuted.* As to the remaining imputation of licentiousness, it evidently arose from those outward marks of Christian love, which were so visible in the conduct of believers towards one another; a spiritual affection in the family of Christ, which was beyond the understanding of the men of nature. They therefore viewed these mutual tokens of charity, with the eye of impurity, and traduced them with the tongue of defamation.†

* The same carelessness continued, with the same spirit of persecution, to the time of Arnobius: Quæ omnia vos gesta neque scitis, neque scire voluistis, neque unquam vobis necessaria judicâstis. Lib. 2, p. 50, Ed. Lugd. Bat. 1621. The Romanists, who draw arguments for transubstantiation from the literal interpretation of the Pagans, ought to have observed, that while the Christian writers disclaim, with every mark of horror, the imputation of an human sacrifice, they make no attempt to explain the passage in question, as if it still meant the substantial eating of the flesh of Christ, though under cover of the accident of bread.

† Sed ejusmodi vel maximè dilectionis operatio notam nobis inurit penès quosdam. Vide, inquiunt, ut se invicem diligant! Tert. Apol. c. 39.

As the Gospel extended itself, these charges were multiplied by the growing hatred of Paganism. Others are mentioned in the curious and interesting dialogue of Minucius Felix, in the apology of Tertullian, and in many controversial writings of the fathers: but it will be sufficient for the present purpose, to have named those which are refuted by Athenagoras.*

Concerning the enmity of the Greeks to the Gospel, and the consequences of it to the harassed Christians, we have some curious particulars from sacred antiquity. It may be observed in general, that, all power being in Roman hands, the Christians pleaded with them chiefly for liberty, property, and life itself. With the Greeks, their disputes were commonly of a philosophical nature. Sometimes, indeed, the arguments are mingled; but if those which were chiefly calculated for the latter people, are occasionally addressed to the former, it is for the sake of counteracting the influence which Grecian preju-

* Τρία ἐπιφημίζουσιν ἡμῖν ἐγκλήματα, ἀθεότητα, Θυέστεια δεῖπνα, Οἰδιποδείους μίξεις. p. 4. The terms employed against the Christians are drawn from the early fables of the poets, or the subjects which the stage had made familiar.

dices might have, when conveyed through Grecian literature, upon the Roman tribunals.

It would appear, from the manner in which Tatian conducts his oration against the Greeks, that one of the principal causes of their hostility to the Gospel, was the injury supposed to be done by Revelation to their philosophy. By a strange vanity, which had long distinguished that people, and which no calamities or disgraces of their own could extirpate, they had imagined themselves to be the first of men,* the original possessors of their soil, perhaps the produce of it: and they fondly cherished the notion, that from their genius flowed, or ought to flow, to the rest of mankind, the knowledge of all art and science. This pretension was completely overthrown by the superior claim of the Scriptures, which therefore became the object of their hatred and detraction. No argument is more common with the defenders of the faith, than that its origin ascended beyond the highest historical

* This is the grave decision of Laertius, after noticing the claims made by some in favour of the Barbarians—*λανθάνεσι δ' ἀυτὲς τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων κατορθώματα, ἀφ' ὧν μὴ ὅτι γε φιλοσοφία, αλλὰ καὶ γένος ἀνθρώπων ἦρξε, βαρβάροις προσάπτοντες.*—Proem.

ages of Greece. In order to strengthen this assertion, they point out the foreign derivation of Grecian knowledge, both civil and mythological. Which of your arts and institutions, says Tatian, has not taken its rise among the Barbarians whom you so much despise?* Athenagoras, too, well knowing the influence of the Grecian pretensions on those whom he addressed,† triumphantly quotes the testimony of Herodotus, who confesses that Hesiod and Homer, not more than four hundred years before his time, were the first who sung the genealogy of their Gods, assigned to them their names, honours, and characteristic employments, and described their sexes and figures."‡ As to the statues, they were the late produce of time and acci-

* Ποῖον γὰρ ἐπιτήδευμα παρ' ὑμῖν, τὴν σύστασιν ὐκ ἀπὸ βαρβάρων ἐκτήσατο; Orat. ad Græc. c. 1.

† Having given to M. Aurelius and Commodus, the titles of Αρμενιάκοις and Σαρματίκοις, he carefully adds, τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, φιλοσόφοις.

‡ Ἡσίοδον γὰρ καὶ Ὁμηρὸν ἡλικίην τετρακοσίοις ἔτεσι δοκέω πρεσβυτέρους ἐμοῦ γενέσθαι καὶ οὐ πλέοσι, τοὺς καὶ γένη καὶ ὀνόματα δόντας· ὅτοι δὲ εἰσιν οἱ ποιήσαντες θεογονίην Ἕλλησι, καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπωνυμίας δόντες, καὶ τιμάς τε καὶ τέχνας διελόντες, καὶ εἴδεα ἀυτῶν σημήναντες.—Leg. pro Christ. p. 16.

dent; and the Gods who were to be moulded, or painted, or chiselled for the adoration of men, were obliged to wait* till Saurias of Samos, Crato of Sicyon, and Cleanthes and Corè of Corinth were born, and had learnt or invented their arts. And in opposition to the supercilious charge, that the Scriptures were the produce of yesterday,† the Christian writers are particularly earnest and successful in establishing the priority of the claim of Moses, both in point of time and of religious authority. This argument, concerning antiquity, was urged by many; by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius. Theophilus was, perhaps, the first who attempted a complete view of the chronology of the world, in opposition to the assumptions of Grecian vanity, and prepared the way for the labours of Eusebius.

* *Αἱ δ' εἰκόνες, μέχρι μήπω πλαστικὴ και γραφικὴ καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιητικὴ ἦσαν, ὁδὲ ἐνομίζοντο.*—Ib.

† *Ἡμῖν δὲ συμβαλὼν, ἔτι λῆρον ἡγῇ τυγχάνειν τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, οἰόμενος προσφάτυς καὶ νεωτερικὰς ἶναι τὰς παρ' ἡμῖν γραφάς.*—Theoph. lib. 3. p. 117. Arnobius puts the same objection in the mouth of his opponents—Sed antiquiora, inquitis, nostra sunt, ac per hoc fidei et veritatis plenissima. Lib. 1. p. 34.

Having therefore the advantage of this superior antiquity, they are frequent in the mention of an opinion which must have been particularly galling to the Greeks; that certain parts of their knowledge had been derived to them from the Hebrews, that the writings of Moses were the source from which they had drawn their higher philosophy, and that their sophists secretly availed themselves of an assistance which they affected to disown, and which they did not always understand. They wished to reconcile originality with their plagiarism; they therefore called in the ornaments of rhetoric and fable, and sought to disguise what they had substantially borrowed.* This supposition, which was very prevalent in the early church, was calculated to increase the enmity of the Greeks to the Gospel: and never did wounded vanity shew a more implacable resent-

* Πολλοὶ γὰρ οἱ κατ' ἀυτὺς σοφισταὶ κεχρημένοι περιεργίᾳ, τὰ ὅσα περὶ τῶν κατὰ Μωσέα, καὶ τῶν ὁμοίως ἀυτῷ φιλοσοφούντων ἔγνωσαν, ἃ καὶ παραχαράττειν ἐπειράσθησαν· πρῶτον μὲν, ἵνα τι λέγειν ἴδιον νομίζωνται· δεύτερον δὲ, ὅπως τὰ ὅσα μὴ συνίεσαν, διὰ τινος ἐπιπλάσεω ῥητολογίας παρακαλύπτοντες, ταῖς μυθολογίαις τὴν ἀλήθειαν παραπρεσβεύωσι.—Tat. Orat. cont. Græcos, c. 61.

ment. The persecutions which they excited against the Christians were so considerable as to furnish Dodwell with an argument for altering the age of Theophilus, who records them; for bringing him down to the third century, and placing him under the intolerant reign of Severus.* But, whatever the Greeks could not accomplish by the sword, they endeavoured to effect by the force of impious language; and such was the madness with which they were inflamed, that they proposed rewards and honours to such of their poets and sophists as should write with most wit and elegance in opposition to the one, true and incorruptible God,† from whom descend-

* Ἔτι μὴν καὶ τοὺς σεβομένους αὐτὸν (Θεὸν) ἐδίωξαν, καὶ τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν διώκουσιν. Lib. iii. p. 140. Cave rightly contends against Dodwell, that these expressions do not necessarily refer to a persecution like that of Severus. Poterant esse persecutiones τοπικαὶ καὶ μερικαὶ, hinc, indè excitatæ, quarum in historiâ ecclesiasticâ non pauca habentur exempla. In voc. Theophil. This well agrees with the sentiment of the text, which alludes rather to the effects of local malice, harassing the professors of the faith, than to one of the general persecutions.

† ὃ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐνφώνως ὑβρίζουσι τὸν Θεὸν, ἄθλα καὶ τιμὰς τιθέασι.—Theoph. lib. 3. p. 140.

ed to mankind the gift of eternal happiness, through Jesus Christ.

As to the Jews, they present to us a picture of persecution more disgusting, if possible, than that of the Pagans. Their temple overthrown; their ancient polity finally dissolved; their nation scattered abroad; their persons despised; and their very name abhorred by the people among whom they dwelt; they yet drew a malignant satisfaction from the hatred with which they pursued the believers of the Gospel. They had crucified the author of the faith, and driven the faith itself beyond the borders of their country. Still they saw with envy and alarm, the progress which the Gospel was making, under distresses and persecutions of every sort; for "the work was of God, and men could not bring it to nought." Indeed, it is highly probable, from a passage of Justin Martyr's dialogue, that they sometimes obtained from the Roman government, the liberty of destroying Christians, or that they destroyed them with impunity.* But

* Ἀυτȣ̃ τε ἐκέινȣ (Χριστȣ) καὶ τῶν ἐις ἐκε̃ινον πιστευόντων καταρᾶσθε, καὶ ὁπόταν ἐξȣσίαν ἔχητε, ἀναιρεῖτε. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 323. This can hardly be confined to the crucifixion of Christ; but if it involves the occasional destruction

in general, they could only excite others to the work of death; and this was done with too fatal a success. "Ye pour out curses in your assemblies on all who believe in Christ," adds Justin; "and other nations, giving a deadly effect to your imprecations, destroy those who merely confess his name."*

But there is one instance of Jewish persecution, which goes beyond the rest; and the manner in which Justin mentions it, throws no small light on certain passages of Scripture. St. Matthew says, c. 28, 15, that, after the astonishment occasioned by the resurrection of Christ, the chief priests gave money to the soldiers to report, that he was stolen away by his disciples, "while they

of his followers by Jewish hands, the Roman government was grown more lavish of Christian blood than in the time of St. Paul.

* Ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ὑμῶν καταρᾶσθε πάντων τῶν ἀπ' ἐκείνου γενομένων Χριστιανῶν, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἔθνη (this is an evident allusion to the Romans) ἃ καὶ ἐνεργῇ τὴν κατάραν ἐργάζονται, ἀναιροῦνται τοὺς μόνον ὁμολογοῦντας ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι Χριστιανούς. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 323. That the Jews were willing assistants at the execution of Christians by the Gentile persecutors, we see in the Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp —μάλιστα Ἰουδαίων προθύμως, ΩΣ ΕΘΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ, εἰς ταῦτα ὑπουργούντων. C. 13, Patr. Apostol. Ed. Cotel.

slept." In his reference to this fact, Justin grafts upon it another of far greater extent, an universal mission for the express purpose of counteracting the propagation of the faith of Christ! Having dwelt on the denunciations of Jonah against the impenitence of Nineveh, a type of the vengeance threatened by Christ to Jerusalem, "but you, O Jews," says he, "though ye knew these things, did not repent, notwithstanding the mercy of God, who would have accepted your return to him. But after the resurrection of Christ, you appointed chosen men of your own, and sent them into all the world,* with a declaration

* Ἄνδρας χειροτονήσαντες ἐκλεκτοὺς, εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐπέπεμψατε. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 335. The charge of Atheism was sufficiently strange in the Pagans. From the Jews it was by no means to be expected. Yet there are several ways in which it may be explained. Perhaps the term was used in order to accommodate the prejudices of the Gentiles, to whom the Jewish mission was partly sent. There were also heretical Christians, who rejected so much of the essential doctrines of the Gospel, that Justin himself calls them ἀθέους καὶ ἀσεβεῖς αἱρεσιώτας. The orthodox therefore might be conveniently branded with the ill character of these sectaries. But the most probable cause of this charge was, the strange persuasion of the Jews, that the Christians had forsaken God, and put their trust in man,

that an atheistical and lawless heresy had been excited by Jesus, a Galilean impostor; that you had crucified him, but that his disciples stole him by night from the tomb, and deceived mankind with the fiction that he had risen from the dead, and ascended into Heaven." In a subsequent passage, he states the same fact, that the high priests and teachers of the people had caused the name of Christ to be profaned and blasphemed, through all the earth.* Indeed, he frequently upbraids Trypho with it; and he speaks of the Anti-Christian mission, as if the effects of it were felt in his time.

With this mention of the Jewish embassy, he couples the character of the converts made by it, and reminds us of another passage of

because they confessed the divinity of Christ! This appears from the insulting question of Trypho—καταλειπόντι δὲ τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ εἰς ἄνθρωπον ἐλπίσαντι, ποία ἔτι περιλείπεται σωτηρία; ib. p. 226.

* ὃ τὸ ὄνομα βεβηλωθῆναι κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν καὶ βλασφημεῖσθαι οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς τῶν λαῶν ὑμῶν καὶ διδάσκαλοι ἐφγάσαντο —ib. p. 345. In the Quæstiones ad Orthod. the passage of St. Matthew is quoted without any mention of the circumstances so often stated in the dialogue. This may be one internal mark, among many others, that the work is not Justin's.

St. Matthew, c. 23, 15. There our Lord had denounced the Scribes and Pharisees, whose proselytes were "twofold more the children of Hell than themselves." In the following century, Justin described the actual circumstances of the Jews and Christians. "Your proselytes," says he to Trypho, "not only do not believe in Christ, but blaspheme his name with twofold more virulence than yourselves. They are ready to shew their malicious zeal against us; and, to obtain merit in your eyes, wish to us reproach, and torment, and death."* Our Lord's denunciation must therefore be regarded as in a great degree prophetical: and the conduct of the Jews in the following age was one part of its accomplishment.†

If the increased wickedness of the Jewish proselytes is thus proved through the intemperate blasphemy poured forth against the name of Christ; the pains taken by those

* Οἱ δὲ προσήλυτοι ὃ μόνον ὃ πιστεύουσιν, ἀλλὰ διπλότερον ὑμῶν βλασφημοῦσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἡμᾶς τοὺς εἰς ἐκεῖνον πιστεύοντας καὶ φονεύειν καὶ ἀικίζειν βούλονται. ib. p. 350.

† Justin brings it home to the Jews of his own age, ΝΥΝ δὲ διπλότερον υἱοὶ γεέννης, ὡς αὐτὸς εἶπε, γίνεσθε—ib. p. 350.

who "compassed sea and land," to make one such proselyte, receive an illustration from the fact already adduced. Grotius interprets this as a proverbial expression, denoting a certain degree of labour, and anxious search.* But it is something more. In its reference to the event so particularly pointed out by Justin, it is entitled to a stricter interpretation. The Anti-Christian mission was, as we have seen, actually sent throughout the extent of the Roman empire; and "seas and lands" were literally "compassed," in order to make proselytes, and to defeat the propagation of the Gospel.

Such were the early miseries which the Gospel suffered from the various enmity of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. Such were the distresses and persecutions, amidst which the propagators of the faith went forth to announce to the world the glad tidings of salvation; and such the fearful exactness with which the denunciations of Christ were ful-

* Sollicitum inquirendi laborem significans. Apud Crit. Sacr. He observes the similarity between the passage of Justin and that of St. Matthew, but does not interpret the latter with all the force, of which it appears to be capable.

filled in the experience of his followers. Having paused for a moment, to look back on the affecting scene, let us change the view. We have accompanied our religion in its early difficulties and dangers. Let us now exult with it in its patience and its triumphs.

It is very observable, that the Pagan superstition, which had been employed, with so fatal an industry, in harassing the religion of Christ, was itself unable to bear the pressure of calamity. It is the characteristic of idolatry to shrink from the touch of misfortune. Teaching no rational confidence in God, it leaves the miserable worshipper without resignation, and without courage, in the hour of trial. This shall hereafter be more particularly shewn. At present, let us attend to the Gospel, and consider how patiently it endured, how victoriously it surmounted the distresses and difficulties which conspired to hinder its progress.

We have heard the statement which St. Paul made of his extraordinary sufferings. Let us also hear his fortitude and his triumph. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth

us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abundeth by Christ."* If troubled on every side, "he is not distressed;" if "perplexed, he is not in despair;" if persecuted, he is "not forsaken;" if "cast down, he is not destroyed."† And notwithstanding the privations under which he labours, he boldly and truly maintains, that the faith of Christ, destitute as it may sometimes appear, has the promise even of the present life, as well as of that which is to come. The Christian has peculiar consolations in adversity itself. The very pressure of evil promotes the immediate good of his soul, and augments the sense of that future happiness, of which the present supports of the Spirit of God, and the testimony of conscience are the sure and animating pledges.

The Bishop of Antioch had to complain, that his profession of Christianity had estranged from him the former friend of his

* 2 Cor. i. 3—5. † 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

bosom. "Thou still extollest thy idols," says he to Autolycus, "and upbraidest me with the name of Christian which I bear, as if it were something evil." Yet he glories in this new title, and determines to forsake every other for it. "I bear with all joy a name dear to God, though odious to the world, wishing only that I may become acceptable to Heaven through the goodness which my religion teaches."*

Justin Martyr has amply stated the strange and various persecutions to which the Gospel was subjected by the Roman government in his age. But it is remarkable, that those very persecutions were the means of his con-

* Ἔτι δὲ φῄς με, καὶ Χριστιανὸν ὡς κακὸν τοῦνομα φοροῦντα. Ἐγὼ μὲν ὂν ὁμολογῶ εἶναι Χριστιανὸς, καὶ φορῶ τὸ θεοφιλὲς ὄνομα τοῦτο, ἐλπίζων εὔχρηστος εἶναι τῷ Θεῷ. Theoph. lib. i. p. 69. Some of the early writers, either wishing to accommodate themselves to the practice of the Pagans, who generally wrote the name of Christ, Chrestus; or, intent perhaps on disputing successfully with them on their own terms, derived the word Christian from χρηστος. This is the foundation of the pious expression of Theophilus. This too is the meaning of Justin Martyr, Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ ἶναι κατηγορούμεθα· τὸ δὲ Χρηστὸν μισεῖσθαι ὁ δίκαιον. Apol. 2. p. 55. His argument is, that the accusers proved their own hatred of goodness through their persecution of Christianity.

version; for the manner in which he saw others bear them, gave to his mind the first impulse of esteem for Christianity. "I, a zealous follower of Plato," says he, "could not look upon the fearless manner in which the followers of the Gospel bore death, and whatever was most terrible to human nature, without the firmest persuasion of the innocence of their lives, and their superiority to all vicious indulgence. For what man of pleasure, what lover of intemperance, what banquetter on human flesh, could so cheerfully embrace death, and deprive himself of all which he esteemed valuable? Instead of freely meeting destruction, would he not take every method to escape the punishment threatened by the magistrate, and to preserve his life and its enjoyments?"* Under the

* Καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τοῖς Πλάτωνος χαίρων διδάγμασι, διαβαλλομένους ἀκούων Χριστιανοὺς, ὁρῶν δὲ ἀφόβους πρὸς θάνατον, καὶ πάντα τὰ (ἄλλα) νομιζόμενα φοβερὰ, ἐνενόουν ἀδύνατον εἶναι ἐν κακίᾳ καὶ φιληδονίᾳ ὑπάρχειν αὐτοὺς· τίς γὰρ φιλήδονος, ἢ ἀκρατὴς, καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν βορὰν ἀγαθὸν ἡγούμενος, δύναιτ' ἂν θάνατον ἀσπάζεσθαι, ὅπως τῶν ἀυτοῦ ἀγαθῶν στερηθῇ· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκ παντὸς ζῆν (μὲν) ἀεὶ τὴν ἐνθάδε βιοτὴν, καὶ λανθάνειν τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐπειρᾶτο· οὐχ' ὅτι γε ἑαυτὸν κατήγγελλε φονευθησόμενον; Apol. I. p. 50.

influence of this persuasion, he became a Christian, and gloried in the name, whatever was the derision or the danger which pursued it. And he sealed his testimony with his blood. He fell a joyful victim to the hatred of that philosophy which he had renounced for the sake of the Gospel.

In the pleading of Athenagoras are related the losses, the reproaches, the torments endured for the sake of the faith. But the grief which alone affects him, arises from the injury done to the religion of Christ through the imputations falsely laid against its professors. "It is not personal insult which moves us; for we have learned, that, if smitten on one cheek, we should turn the other also. It is not the forfeiture of the goods of this world, in which other men place their happiness; for we have learned, that, if a man take our cloak, we should give him our coat. But when we have surrendered all we possess, we are still the objects of their relentless hatred; and they heap upon us the charges of crimes the very thought of which is forbidden by our religion, and which can only be found in the practices of their own idolatry."*

* Ὅταν ἀπείπωμεν τοῖς χρήμασιν, ἐπιβουλεύουσιν ἡμῖν, κα-

The apology of Tertullian is a mixture of indignation, strong reasoning, and irony. He is generally serious, though sometimes sportive, and while he repels the calumnies of the enemies of the faith, he can indulge a vein of pleasantry.

He declares his belief with much force and dignity. "Mangled by your cruelty, and covered with our own blood, we still proclaim aloud—We worship God through Christ. Persist in your own opinion, and deem him a mere man. Yet through him God makes himself known; in him he will be worshipped. But rather ought ye to enquire, whether the divinity of Christ be not the true divinity, the knowledge of which leads the worshipper to all goodness, and therefore compels him to reject the lying pretensions of your idols."* Again, he spor-

τασκεδάζοντες ὄχλον ἐγκλημάτων· ἃ ἡμῖν μὲν, οὐδὲ μέχρις ὑπονοίας, τοῖς δὲ ἀδολεσχοῦσι καὶ τῷ ἐκείνων πρόσεστι γένει. Leg. pro Christ. p. 3.

* Dicimus, et palàm dicimus, et vobis torquentibus. Lacerati et cruenti vociferamur, Deum colimus per Christum. Illum hominem putate. Per eum, et in eo, se cognosci vult Deus, et coli. Quærite ergo, si vera est ista divinitas Christi. Si ea est, quâ cognitâ ad bonum quis reformatur, sequitur, ut falsa renuncietur quævis alia contraria comperta:

tively compares the idols themselves with the mangled bodies of the Christians. "You place us upon a cross, or the stump of some tree; and on a frame of the like shape, you fashion your gods of clay. You lacerate our sides with hooks of iron; with similar labour do you employ axes, and saws, and augers on your gods of wood. You throw us into the fire; and in the fire you cast your gods of metal. Or perhaps you send us to the mines; but from thence come your best divinities. We are therefore under the like circumstances with them; and if divinity is produced by hewing and mangling, our tortures are our consecration, and we are fit objects of your worship."*

in primis illa, quæ delitescens sub nominibus et imaginibus mortuorum, quibusdam signis et miraculis et oraculis fidem divinitatis operatur. C. 21.

* Crucibus et stipitibus imponitis Christianos. Quod simulachrum non priùs argilla deformat cruci et stipiti superstructa? In patibulo primùm corpus Dei vestri dedicatur. Ungulis deraditis latera Christianorum. At in Deos vestros per omnia membra validiùs incumbunt asciæ, et runcinæ, et scobinæ. Ignibus urimur. Hoc et illi à primâ quidem massâ. In metalla damnamur. Indè censentur Dii vestri. Si per hæc constat divinitas aliqua; ergo qui puniuntur, consecrantur, et numina erunt dicenda supplicia. C. 12.—

Finally, Tatian shall bear his testimony, a testimony which, notwithstanding his other failings, is the more precious on account of his intimate knowledge of Grecian learning. "In vain do you advise me to consult my personal safety. That knowledge of God which the Scriptures have given me, I will not conceal. That contempt of death which you affect to derive from human philosophy, I will truly shew through the profession of my Christian faith. The Scriptures are more worthy of my regard than the philosophy in which I was bred. They are superior to it in all things; in antiquity, if we consider the late origin of Grecian knowledge; in authority, if we look at its errors. I am captivated by their style, free from Grecian inflation; the artless simplicity of the writers, the satisfactory account of creation, the impressiveness of the prophecies, the loftiness of the precepts, and the general government of God."* And in proportion to this zeal in

The modes in which the Christians were tortured, are frequently pointed out by him in this indirect way.

* Περινοοῦντι δὲ μοι τὰ σπουδαῖα, συνέβη γραφαῖς τισιν ἐντυχεῖν βαρβαρικαῖς, πρεσβυτέραις μὲν, ὡς πρὸς τὰ Ἑλλήνων δόγματα· θειοτέραις δὲ, ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνων πλάνην·

the propagators of the faith, this sacred contempt of danger and death itself for the sake of Jesus Christ, was the actual extension of the Gospel. Justin Martyr states the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the growing conversion of the Gentiles from all nations, as the accomplishments of prophecy witnessed by that age.* These conversions are again mentioned in the dialogue, in which he labours to prove, that the benediction of Joseph by Moses was then fulfilling itself in the rapid abandonment of those idolatrous practices with which Satan had hitherto enslaved the Heathen nations.† This went on with increasing success; till, through the force of the impression made on the government by these private conversions, and the irresistible

καὶ μοι πεισθῆναι ταύταις συνέβη, διὰ τε τῶν λέξεων τὸ ἄτυφον, καὶ τῶν εἰπόντων τὸ ἀνεπιτήδευτον, καὶ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς ποιήσεως τὸ ἐυκατάληπτον, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων τὸ προγνωστικὸν, καὶ τῶν παράγγελμάτων τὸ ἐξαίσιον, καὶ τῶν ὅλων τὸ μοναρχικὸν. Orat. cont. Græcos. C. 46.

* Καὶ ὅτως γενόμενα ὁρῶμεν, γῆς μὲν Ἰουδαίων ἐρήμωσιν, καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους ἀνθρώπων διὰ τῆς παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἀυτου διδαχῆς πεισθέντας. Apol. 2. p. 88.

† Ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν διὰ τότου τοῦ μυστηρίου εἰς τὴν θεοσέβειαν ἐτράπησαν ἀπὸ τῶν ματάιων ἐιδώλων καὶ δαιμόνων. Dial. cum Tryph. ib. p. 318. Compare Deut. xxxiii. 17.

credit obtained for the Gospel, the empire was induced formally to accept the faith; and, as Christ had foretold, the world believed on him.*

Such again were the triumphs of the Gospel, in its early encounter with the hostility of the world. Nor let it be imagined, that it was an imitation of the Heathen schools, and the vanity of maintaining a novelty of doctrine which led those martyrs and confessors to brave the established Paganism by the confession of the faith of Christ. On the contrary, they exposed the unworthy motives of those who pretended to despise danger for the sake of philosophical opinions. There were some sophists, who in a trembling imitation of Anaxarchus,† affected to maintain, that death was not an evil to be feared. Against the hollow pretensions of these men the Christian writers successfully argued, and either convicted them of secret cowardice under the show of magnanimity, or called

* Totum orbem sibi crediturum esse prædixit; et totus orbis, sicut prædictum est, credidit. Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. 12. c. 10.

† Πτύσατε τὸν Ἀναξάρχου θύλακον, Ἀναξαρχον δὲ οὐ πλάττετε. Laert. in vit. Anax. lib. 9.

upon them to die in a cause which alone could justify it. Tatian naturally infers the real fear of death in Crescens (one of these philosophists, and as impure as he was cowardly) from his attempts against the life of Justin and himself; since he must have regarded that as an evil which he wished to inflict on those whom he hated. On the other hand, it was justly concluded by him, that philosophical vanity is a miserable reason for the abandonment of life; and hence the Greeks were exhorted to that true fortitude which has its only foundation in the knowledge of God.* The conduct of the early Christians therefore was far removed from that of the Heathen schools. Indeed, our own history presents to us a brilliant proof of the same conscientious fidelity, the same "resistance unto blood," in an age when such motives had no existence, when the question was not, whether a new faith should be introduced into the world, but whether the pure and primitive doctrines of

* Εἰ ῥατὲ μὴ δεῖν δεδιέναι τὸν θάνατον, κοινωνοῦντες ἡμῶν τοῖς δόγμασι, μὴ διὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην δοξημανίαν, ὡς Ανάξαρχος, ἀποθνήσκετε· χάριν δὲ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ γνώσεως, τοῦ θανάτου καταφρονητὰι γένεσθε. Orat. cont. Græc. C. 32.

the Gospel should be asserted and restored to the church of Christ, or whether they should remain for ever buried under the accumulations of that superstition which disfigured their beauty, and destroyed their salutary influence,* Nor were the labours and constancy of our reformers at all inferior to those of the early propagators of the Gospel. Whoever has admired the faith and heroic sufferings of Ignatius or Polycarp, must look with no less satisfaction on those of Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and Hooper. And whoever will sit down to the serious perusal of their history, must, I think, rise up the better Christian; better prepared to meet the common evils of life with resignation, and to sur-

* Quòd si docemus sacrosanctum Dei Evangelium, et veteres Episcopos, atque Ecclesiam primitivam nobíscum facere, nósque non sine justâ causâ, et ab istis discessisse, et ad Apostolos, veterésque Catholicos patres rediisse, idque non obscurè aut vafrè, sed bonâ fide coram Deo, verè, ingenuè, dilucidè, et perspicuè facimus; si illi ipsi qui nostram doctrinam fugiunt, et sese Catholicos dici volunt, apertè videbunt omnes illos titulos antiquitatis, de quibus tantoperè gloriantur, sibi excuti de manibus, et in nostrâ causâ plus nervorum fuisse quàm putârint, speramus, neminem illorum ita negligentem fore salutis suæ, quin velit aliquando cogitationem suscipere, ad utros potiùs se adjungat. Bp. Jewel's Apology, p. 28.

render life itself with joyfulness into the hands of God who gave it. It is impossible not to venerate their glowing piety, their profound humility, their patience under sufferings, their praises of God under distresses and privations of every kind, their prayers for their persecutors, their exemplary and triumphant death. And whoever has any feeling for learning and the powers of reason, must be particularly affected, when he sees them exerted under circumstances the most disastrous, the most calculated to depress courage and to crush the resources of genius; when books were withheld from the imprisoned saint, when the memory alone was to supply its stores for the appointed debate, and when the removal to the place of disputation was but the first and certain step to the expecting flames!*

* Latimer complained at the Oxford Disputation, that in prison he had been permitted to have "neither pen nor ink, nor yet any book, but only the New Testament there in his hand, which he had read over seven times." Ridley too had demanded time and books for the preparation of his answer to the articles presented to him. This was promised, but not granted; and when the articles were sent, he was informed that his answer must be drawn up the same night. In the preface to his answer, he reminds his

It is true, that, in a certain sense, none of these evils were necessary; they might have been avoided, in the one case, by disavowing the name itself of Christian; and in the other, by a base surrender of the vital doctrines of Christianity to the demands of superstition armed with power. And thus the profession of the Gospel is the immediate and only cause of its own sufferings. But, instead of affording an imputation against Christianity, as the timid or the worldly man is apt to reason, this adds to its lustre and credit. For what is it which prompts the professor of the Faith to this intrepid encounter of danger and death; this cheerful submission to evils which appal all other men? what but the strong testimony of conscience resting on the word of God, and more valuable in itself than all the goods of life? what but the feeling of the Divine support, which lifts the soul above the pains of the body? what but the joyful anticipation of that happiness to

judges of this harshness. Et quoniam gravis causa est, quam agimus, et ad eam peragendam quàm simus nunc inexpediti, temporis nimirùm angustiâ et librorum inopiâ oppressi, vobis omnibus ignotum esse non potest. G. Ridley's Life of Ridley, pp. 492 and 675.

which the martyr passes, through his brief, though sharp, torment, when faith discovers visions of approaching glory, and exclaims from the scaffold and the stake, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man," who, through sufferings, went before to prepare a place for his true followers, "sitting at the right hand of God?"*

These are the extreme cases of human suffering; and in providing for these in the triumphant manner here displayed, the Gospel establishes, by consequence, in the hearts of believers an effectual influence against the common evils of life. The unbeliever, under trials of the same sort with those which the Christian well knows how to bear, has no reasonable support for his mind. He suffers therefore with sullenness and an inward resentment against the hand that afflicts him; or with open rage and undisguised profaneness he "curses God and dies."†

Nor is the superiority of the Christian seen only in the better principles through which he bears the unavoidable evils of life. He has a present happiness surpassing that of other men. The Saviour had promised to the meek,

* Acts vii. 56. † Job ii. 9.

that they "should possess the earth."* This expression was meant to point out the advantages resulting from a Christian use of this world; the contentedness with which we receive what God sees to be necessary or convenient to our being, the happy freedom from those malignant and destructive passions which poison the enjoyments of other men, the mildness of temper with which we sooth every occurrence of life, and that lofty tranquillity concerning the objects of the world, which is the blessed effect of our sincere reliance on the Divine providence. This, then, is the foundation on which St. Paul grounds his assertion, that the Christian has the promise of "the life that now is." Sometimes indeed this promise has been misunderstood or misrepresented. In a former age of our country, a puritanical profession of faith was interpreted into a lawful claim to exercise the powers of civil government; and it required time and argument to convince an ambitious sainthood, that the grace of God was not the necessary foundation of the dominion of the world. On the other hand, impiety has entered the lists with hypocrisy,

* St. Matt. v. 5.

and endeavoured to wrest this promise to itself. The laxity of morals which prevailed in an early part of the last century, occasioned a dispute which involved this question, To whom fell the largest share of the common enjoyments of life; to the man of religious sobriety, or to the man of pleasure, the glutton, the drunkard, and the sensualist? The better cause was defended against the false philosophy of the times by the acute and pious Bishop Berkeley, in a part of his Alciphron.* His chief argument is against the strange notion of Mandeville and his followers, who represented private vices as public benefits; and he infers, that before they can be such, they must benefit the individuals who practise them. But this being false, the other cannot be true. Hence he

* Dialogue 2d. The notion, that present indulgence led to happiness, had distinguished most of the Epicureans. This too was well combated by the author of Anti-Lucretius, who maintains, that the virtuous reserve and spiritual hopes of the Christian give him a decided advantage over the man of pleasure, even in the present life.

Ut videas, vel dum in terris hoc ducitur ævum,
Naturæ donis potiora occurrere dona;
Cultorésque Dei jam te magis esse beatos.

Lib. i. 1018.

satisfactorily demonstrates the superior advantages possessed by the man of temperance. His life is proved to be generally longer than that of the reveller; his enjoyments are more perfect; and therefore his portion of the blessings of this world is larger, while the satisfaction which he draws from them is of a more exquisite nature, and more delightful to himself.

Nothing therefore is withheld from the Christian; nothing but sin. Meanwhile, pleasures the most ample, the most satisfactory which human life can admit, are his portion and his recompense,—the pleasures of innocence, of temperance, of thankfulness to God, who deprives us of nothing which does not also tend to deprive us of himself. The free use of this world is permitted to us, while God is the supreme object of our thoughts and affections; while we have that love towards the Author of our happiness, which transcends the love of all other things; and while we so "pass through things temporal, as not to lose the things eternal."

In all cases then it appears, that godliness has the promise of happiness. In the common progress of human affairs, amidst

which we generally pass the longest part of life, the believer has an advantage over other men. He receives with gratitude the good which the opened hand of God pours upon him; he uses it with religious sobriety; and thus the effect of the blessing is increased, while the use itself is prolonged. Under the common evils of life, he experiences comforts and supports unknown to other men. His persuasion of a providence teaches him, that whatever befalls him, is according to the Divine will. In the hands of God are the "issues" of all things, because from him they had their beginning. He may "take away," because he hath first "given," whatever we possess. He may "kill," because he hath first "made alive."* His name therefore is to be equally the subject of our "blessing," under evil and under good; in the moment of death, as in the midst of life itself. And that which thus invigorates the Christian, is the happy influence of the spirit of God. Hence he draws those private supports and invisible consolations which prevent him from sinking under the burden of evil. They si-

* 1 Sam. ii. 6.

lently and gradually raise his soul from its dejection; they dispose him to religious tranquillity, and at length impress upon him that settled rest and godly satisfaction, against which the "changes and the chances of this mortal life" shall never more prevail. But under the pressure of extraordinary dangers and distresses arising from the maintenance of the Faith, the influence of faith is still superior to the evils which it draws upon itself. The evidence of Christian hope rises as persecutions increase. The immediate evil may indeed be avoided by the violation of conscience; but the believer prefers the suffering of the body with the peace of the soul. His affliction, which is "but for a moment, is not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in him hereafter." He therefore joyfully lays down this mortal life, in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal happiness through Jesus Christ.

These we deem the peculiar privileges, this the distinctive honour of Christian godliness. It has the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." But the Gospel has not been without a rival in

these pretensions. Paganism, the early enemy of Christianity, has laid claim to the same advantages! A more full examination therefore of the history and nature of this claim, and a free exposure of the character, temper, and doctrines of Paganism, shall be the subject of the following course of lectures. Nor perhaps can I discharge my duty in this place, in a manner more proper for myself, or more consonant with the peculiar studies of my audience, than by the discussion of such a question. The inquiry will carry us into the midst of those subjects which ancient history and mythology have made familiar to every scholar; and it will exhibit a curious and interesting picture of Christian literature combating with Paganism, and maintaining the superiority of its doctrines during the early ages of the Gospel. The cause of Christianity will thus be promoted through the meanness and insufficiency of the heathen superstitions. That species of learning which some regard as noxious in its nature, and others, as at least useless in its tendency, will be made to administer to our Christian benefit. From the futility of the inventions of nature, we shall learn to reverence still

more the Divine wisdom, which exhibited Paganism in competition with the faith of Christ, and finally convinced the world, that the success of the Gospel was due to the heavenly power which directed it, and to the solid and ever-growing reason on which it was founded.

CHAPTER II.

TWO CLASSES OF PAGAN WORSHIPPERS...CLAIM OF TEMPORAL HAPPINESS BY THE FIRST CLASS...GROUNDS OF IT...REFUTED BY AN APPEAL TO THE GENERAL TEMPER OF PAGANISM... SPECIMENS FROM EUSEBIUS, ARNOBIUS, AMBROSE, PRUDENTIUS... CAUSE OF THE GOSPEL FARTHER VINDICATED BY OROSIUS AND AUGUSTIN...THEIR CHARACTERS.

For our knowledge of the rivalship which Paganism affected to maintain with the Gospel in the promise of happiness to its votaries, we are chiefly indebted to the early Christian writers. In their disputations with the enemies of the Faith, they have stated the claims of idolatry with more fullness and perspicuity than the idolaters themselves. They have given form and consistency to the desultory and uncertain notions of Heathenism; and with that fearlessness which marks the conscious defence of truth, placed the arguments of their opponents in a clearer and more intelligible view, that they might refute them in a more triumphant and convincing manner.

The inquiries of the Pagans into the efficacy of their own superstitions were directed principally to the following points;—whether any good was to be expected from the worship of the gods? and, a good being admitted, of what nature it was? The first of these questions needs not to be discussed on the present occasion. We know, indeed, that many of the antients, while they complied with the outward institutions of their country, discarded the belief of the existence, or the providence of any gods, and consequently, the hope of any recompense to be derived from the acknowledgement of them. But it was the profession of the heathen world in general, that to the practice of idolatry some benefit was attached. The great difference took place therefore on the other question,—of what nature this benefit was? On this point, two parties were formed, whose motives are stated, and whose arguments are fully and circumstantially confuted by Augustin.

1. It is probable that the blind and ignorant superstition of the vulgar Pagans excluded nothing from their belief; and that, without thought or inquiry, they expected

every kind of good as the result of their adherence to the customary worship of the gods. But into their gross and undistinguishing notions it is not intended to enter. The present question is concerning those who aspired to defend the cause of idolatry by some show of reason and argument. The first of these parties, therefore, sufficiently raised above the vulgar to despise their gross notions of futurity, yet so uninstructed or so sensual as to be fully satisfied with the gratifications which worldly objects could impart, professed to serve their idols with no other view than that of present prosperity.* This comprehended both public and private welfare. Success in war, indulgence in peace, wealth, beauty, genius, honour, fame, and length of life, were therefore the only motives of their prayers. This description is confirmed in each of its branches by the testimony of the Pagan writers. What were the public benefits supposed to be derived to the state from the practice of idolatry, we see in the pleading of Symmachus for the restoration of the ancient rites. He

* Res humanas ita prosperari volunt, ut ad hoc multorum Deorum cultum, quos Pagani colere consueverunt, necessarium esse arbitrentur. Aug. Retract. lib. ii. c. 43.

argues that, as souls are allotted to the individual bodies of men, separate genii are appointed to preside over civil communities.* On their fostering care therefore depends the welfare of the state; and consequently, the beings, whose care is thus necessary to the existence of empire, are to be rendered propitious by outward acknowledgments of their protection. This argument will by-and-by be stated at greater length. At present, it will be sufficient to notice the persuasion, that to the long-continued favour of the deities collectively worshipped by the superstition of Rome, was to be ascribed her possession of the sovereignty of the world.† Again, what were the private advantages aimed at in the prayers of individuals, we are sufficiently informed through the satire of

* Ut animæ nascentibus, ita populis fatales genii dividuntur. Pro Sacr. Patr. apud Prudent.

† Hic cultus in leges meas orbem redegit. ib. It is Rome that speaks. From Tertullian's refutation, we see how strong was the persuasion in his time, that Roman greatness had arisen from piety to the Roman gods: Romanos pro merito religiositatis diligentissimæ in tantum sublimitatis elatos. Apol. c. 25. Zosimus is rancorously full of this notion.

Juvenal, who has enumerated the objects of desire commonly named in the temples of the gods,* and has pronounced of some, that they are superfluous, and of others, that they are pernicious.

Such were the sentiments of the first class of idolaters mentioned by Augustin. To obtain worldly good, and to avoid worldly evil, both in public and private life, were the objects of their prayers.† Of this class of

* Honores, — divitiæ, — eloquium, — fama, — bellorum exuviæ,—spatium vitæ,—forma. Sat. 10.

† The folly of importuning the gods for these purposes was indeed pointed out by men of superior name. But one general observation may be made on the very best rules which Pagan wisdom has prescribed to the piety of men. Particular requests for riches, power, and such things, are sometimes forbidden, not through a genuine principle of self-denial, or moral reserve; not through a virtuous distrust of the objects themselves, and a fear of their seductive influence on the heart; but because the gods best know whether they are suitable to our circumstances, and when they should be bestowed. It is concluded therefore, that the gods are to be complimented with the selection of the objects, and the fortunate moment of applying them; nor is it safe to urge Heaven with importunate petitions, lest, in a vein of malignant indulgence, it should resolve to ruin its short-sighted worshippers by granting the very objects of their desire.

This is the amount of the celebrated prayer of Socrates him-

worshippers therefore it must be supposed, that from the disappointment of their sanguine hopes of present good, impatience and indignation would commonly arise. And these passions we shall hereafter find to have been most strongly excited in the latter and more disastrous age of the western empire. Alarmed and irritated at the prevalence of the common misfortunes, the natural and necessary consequences of their inveterate

self: ἔυχετο δὲ πρὸς τὺς θεὺς ἁπλῶς τ' αγαθὰ διδόναι, ὡς τὺς θεὺς κάλλιστα εἰδότας ὁποῖα ἀγαθὰ εστιν. Memor. lib. 1. c. 3. In the first book of the Cyropædia is a passage which in principle agrees with this: Ἡ γε ἀνθρωπίνη σοφια ὀδὲν μᾶλλον οἶδε τὸ ἄριστον αἱρεῖσθαι, ἢ εἰ κληρόμενος ὅ,τι λάχοι, τοῦτο τις πράττοι, θεοὶ δὲ αἰεὶ ὄντες, πάντα ἴσασι τὰ γεγενημένα, καὶ τὰ ὄντα, καὶ ὅ,τι ἐξ ἑκάστυ αὐτῶν ἀποβήσεται. In both passages the meaning is, that they are unwise who pray expressly for riches, power, &c. because they are ignorant of the temporal consequences which such objects may produce, and which may operate as a revenge upon success itself. In this sense, the thought of Socrates is expressly applied by Juvenal:

> Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
> Conveniat nobis, rebúsque sit utile nostris.

On these and similar passages we sometimes look with a Christian eye, and give them a borrowed sanctity. In order to discover their real value, we must bring them to their own standard, and interpret them upon principles strictly Pagan.

vices, the Pagans sought their own excuse in the crimination of the Christians. To that discountenance of idolatry, therefore, which was the unavoidable result of the civil establishment of the Gospel, they imputed the decay of the state, and all those evils from which Rome was said to have been hitherto preserved by the vigilance and power of its protecting deities.

2. But there was a second class of persons, whose observation of the world, whose knowledge of history, and whose freedom from the more common prejudices, enabled them to discover, and emboldened them to confess, that these evils were not the exclusive produce of their own days. They knew that disasters, both public and private, had occurred in former ages; and such was the nature of men and things, that temporal evils would always exist, in a greater or less degree, as times, and places, and persons, might conspire to produce them.* These

* Fatentur hæc mala nec defuisse unquam, nec defutura mortalibus; et ea nunc magna, nunc parva, locis, temporibus, personísque variari; sed Deorum multorum cultum, quo eis sacrificatur, propter vitam post mortem futuram esse utilem disputant. Aug. Retract. lib. ii. c. 43.

men therefore approached the shrines of the gods through other motives. They had observed, that security from present sufferings was not the necessary consequence of their prayers; and as they still presumed, that their worship was entitled to some recompense, nothing remained but to profess, that they expected a benefit, however unknown or undefined, in another state of things that might succeed the present life.

These then were the two principal doctrines of the Gentile superstition, as they are described to us in the zealous and eloquent refutations of them by the Christian writers. The parties differed in opinion concerning the nature of the benefits supposed to result from the worship offered to their common idols; but between them both, they claimed the same advantages which had been singly attributed by the apostle to that "godliness" which he taught. The first class professed to gain the advantages of the "life that now is;" the second looked to the rewards of "that which is to come." Against both these false claims was successfully raised the voice of Christian antiquity; and to both we will give attention in their order.

I. Paganism asserted the power of rewarding its votaries with temporal prosperity. This pretension is too extravagant to have arisen from a dispassionate view of the nature of idolatry: it was rather created by fortuitous circumstances, and increased in proportion to the decline of the empire, and the growth of those evils under which it finally sunk. Accordingly we find, that the events which gave the greater and more plausible encouragement to the claim in favour of the gods, were the invasions of Italy, and the capture of Rome, in the beginning of the fifth century, by the Barbarians under Alaric.* The impatient temper of idolatry was now particularly excited; and a spirit of revenge arose, the consequence of mortified pride and baffled superstition. Expiring Paganism invidiously lamented the loss of qualities which it never possessed; and Christianity was charged with mischiefs not its own.

* Roma Gothorum irruptione, agentium sub rege Alarico, atque impetu magnæ cladis eversa est; cujus eversionem deorum falsorum multorúmque cultores, quos usitato nomine Paganos vocamus, in Christianam religionem referre conantes, solito acerbiùs et amariùs Deum verum blasphemare cœperunt. Aug. Retract. lib. ii. c. 43.

That the truth of this statement may appear, it will be necessary, in the first place, to take a general view of the temper of Heathenism. While this contrasts with the mildness and resignation of the Gospel, it will furnish us with a convincing inference. If Heathenism was prone to impatience and outrage against its own deities, before the propagation of the faith of Christ; and if this turbulent spirit was turned against the professors of the faith before the civil establishment of the Gospel, the complaint concerning the adverse influence of Christianity, possessed of power, will be thus far refuted, and, together with that, the claim in favour of the temporal prosperity said to have been conferred by the gods of Rome.

The temper of Paganism has been always the same. Versatile in its views, because possessed of no rational confidence in a Supreme Power; and inflamed with resentment at the pressure of unexpected misfortune, it has been ready, in every age and country, to transfer its interested worship from one idol to another, as outward circumstances have suggested. Sometimes, in expectation of better treatment, the worshippers have

adopted the gods of more prosperous nations. Upon this principle we are to interpret the admission, from time to time, of the deities or sacred rites of other countries, which the Roman history describes: for, until the lust of dominion swallowed up every other motive, these incorporations were the mere effect of some public calamity, which was to be averted or removed by additional help from new gods inscribed on the ritual. And hence came, among others, the Epidaurian serpent and the conic stone of Æsculapius, recommended by the Sibylline books.* The Scripture itself furnishes an instance of a similar disposition in Ahaz, an idolatrous king of Jerusalem. "In the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: for he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus which smote him; and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may

* This was a feature of Paganism carefully marked by the Christian writers.—Tanta ac tam intolerabilis pestilentia corripuit civitatem, ut propter eam quâcunque ratione sedandam libros Sibyllinos consulendos putârint, horrendúmque illum Epidaurium colubrum, cum ipso Æsculapii lapide advexerint; quasi verò pestilentia aut antè sedata non sit, aut post orta non fuerit. Oros. Hist. lib. iii. c. 22.

help me."* Sometimes, these adoptions have been made, to the utter abandonment of the gods hitherto worshipped;† and of this we have well-accredited instances, in the history of certain Pagan nations at the present day.‡ But when the former deities were retained, notwithstanding the occurrence of misfortune, they were commonly subjected to chastisement and insult on account of the failure of protection to their worshippers.

When Augustus, during the Sicilian war, lost two of his fleets by storms, he is said to have taken his revenge upon Neptune, by not suffering him to be carried in procession with

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

† The Persians had no new god to offer to Julian. But it appears, that, when the omens were unfavourable to his progress, he vowed never more to sacrifice to his own Mars. Quibus visis, exclamavit indignatus acritèr Julianus, Jovémque testatus est, nulla Marti jam sacra facturum: nec resecravit, celeri morte præreptus. Amm. Marcell. lib. xxiv. c. 6.

‡ Captain Cook found that the natives of the Society Islands disregarded their gods, if they did not give them success; and the inhabitants of one of the islands having been fortunate in war, their neighbours adopted their god, to the exclusion of their own, in hopes of equal victory.

the other gods at the Circensian games.* And when the beloved Germanicus died, the people of Rome were so much enraged, that they stoned the very temples of the gods, and overthrew their altars; while some flung their household divinities into the streets.†

Lucan draws a striking picture of the rage

* Alii dictum factúmque ejus criminantur, quasi, classibus tempestate perditis, exclamaverit, etiam invito Neptuno, victoriam se adepturum: ac die Circensium proximo solenni pompæ simulachrum Dei detraxerit. Sueton. Aug. c. 16. Probably this piece of spleen was intended as a convenient insult to the family of the Pompeys too. They affected a connection with Neptune; and after the destruction of Augustus's ships, Sextus shewed a grateful attention to his great relation by wearing a vest of a *cœrulean colour!*

† Quo defunctus est die, lapidata sunt templa, subversæ Deûm aræ, Lares à quibusdam familiares in publicum abjecti. Sueton. Calig. c. 5.—I see no reason to doubt the chains, the golden cup, &c. which Xerxes, in his different moods, threw into the Hellespont. Herodot. 7. 35. 54. He mentions another instance which has not been so much noticed. Cyrus, in his way to Babylon, had lost one of the white horses, sacred to the sun, in the river Gyndes. He threatened the river, that, from that time, the women should walk through it and not wet their knees! lib. i. 119.—We read of similar instances of impatience in modern Paganism. Knox and others say, that the people of Ceylon revile their deities, and trample them under foot, when their prayers do not succeed, or when they have runs of bad luck, &c.

of the people of Lesbos against Heaven, on account of the defeat of their favourite Pompey:

——————————— littore toto
Plangitur; infestæ tenduntur in æthera dextræ.
Lib. viii. 149.

And our great poet Milton has, with the utmost propriety, given the invention of these attitudes of disappointment and rage to the vanquished followers of Satan, the parent of all idolatrous worship:

——————————— highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.
Book i. 663.

These instances will be sufficient to shew the impatience and resentment inherent in the temper of Paganism. Such then was the disposition, at once superstitious and vindictive, which Christianity had to encounter, at its first appearance in the Roman empire. The persecutions, which have been already related, were doubtless intended to prevent the propagation of a faith which refused an alliance with idolatry, and called upon mankind to renounce these vanities for the "ser-

vice of the living God."* Through the support of Divine power, however, the sacred work rapidly advanced, and the Gospel was widely diffused. This unexpected success sharpened anew the hatred of the Pagans, who now found the Gospel to be an object, on which every misfortune might be conveniently charged. Accordingly, to the persons of the believers was transferred all the exasperation which had been commonly produced by the adversities of the state, and which had been occasionally directed against the temples and statues of the gods themselves. Idolatry was no longer answerable for untoward events, whether public or private. On the contrary, its character was maliciously extolled. It was declared to be the only and proper source of worldly happiness; and therefore all civil disasters, and all natural evils were to be

* The persecutions are charged by Tertullian to an unjust hatred of the Gospel, and a wilful ignorance of its doctrines:—Hanc itaque primam causam apud vos collocamus, iniquitatis odium erga nomen Christianum. Quam iniquitatem idem titulus et onerat et revincit, qui videtur excusare; ignorantia scilicet. Ita utrumque ex alterutro redarguimus, et ignorare illos dum oderunt, et injustè odisse dum ignorant. Apol. c. i.

attributed to the pernicious introduction of the faith of Christ. The gods retained their power of protecting and rewarding their votaries; but, as the influence of the Gospel extended itself, a discredit was thrown upon the ancient worship; and the subjects of Rome were withdrawn from the proper acknowledgment of the beings who had hitherto watched over them, and prospered their country. In consequence of this growing defection, the Deities were offended, gradually withdrew themselves from their accustomed care of mortal interests, and manifested their displeasure in various temporal calamities!*

Among many other proofs of this species of complaint, there is one which is found among the early records of the empire, and which appears to combine a public calamity with the profession of the Gospel. It occurs in the rescript attributed to Antoninus Pius, and preserved by Justin Martyr and Euse-

* Postquâm esse in mundo Christiana gens cœpit, terrarum orbem perisse, multiformibus malis affectum esse genus humanum; ipsos etiam cœlites, derelictis curis solennibus, quibus quondam solebant invisere res nostras, terrarum ab regionibus exterminatos. Arnob. adv. Gentes, lib. i.

bius;* from which we collect, that the Christians of Asia, who had been suffering persecution on other accounts, were also exposed to suspicion and ill treatment in consequence of certain earthquakes which had happened in that part of the empire!†

* Doubts have been entertained concerning the emperor who issued this rescript. Many have assigned it to M. Aurelius, whose name indeed is prefixed to it by Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 13; though in the preceding chapter he gives it to Antoninus. This may have contributed in some measure to the doubts concerning its authenticity. The complimentary parts appear to be overstrained, and have the air of being not genuine. But the repetition of the earthquakes is supported by history; and the recent, or actual existence of the calamity on which it dwells, is a circumstance not likely to have been so distinctly pointed out in a later age.

† A great earthquake which affected Bithynia and the neighbourhood of the Hellespont, is attributed by Xiphilinus to the time of Antoninus Pius. Another, not less terrible, destroyed Smyrna in the reign of M. Aurelius. By the former, the large and beautiful temple of Cyzicus was overthrown. Both these events however are supposed by some to have happened under the same emperor, M. Aurelius. Dio. Cass. lib. lxx. c. 3. It is remarkable, that the God of Earthquakes was unknown. The propitiation was offered at hazard;—Si Deo, si Deæ; idque ex decreto pontificum observatum esse M. Varro dicit; quoniam et quâ vi, et per quem Deorum Dearúmve terra tremeret, incertum esset.

The prince directs the community to which he writes, not to take their own vengeance on those who refused to worship the gods, but rather to leave the offenders to the chastisement of Heaven; especially, since no good effects were to be expected from the punishments inflicted upon them, and death itself seemed to be more acceptable than the abandonment of their faith. He then cautions the Pagans concerning their own behaviour under these calamities;* and bids them not

A. Gellius, lib. ii. c. 28. The authority of Varro (as we shall hereafter see) was supreme at Rome on the subject of rites and ceremonies. Compare lib. xvii. c. 7. of Am. Marcellinus, in whose time the secret had not yet been discovered.

* Περὶ δὲ τῶν σεισμῶν τῶν γεγονότων ΚΑΙ ΓΙΝΟΜΕΝΩΝ, ἐκ ἄτοπον ὑμᾶς ὑποηνῆσαι, ἀθυμοῦντας μὲν ὅταν περ ὦσι, παραβάλλοντας δὲ τὰ ἡμέτερα πρὸς τὰ ἐκείνων. Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. c. 13. There is a considerable difference between this letter, and that which stands at the end of Justin's Apology: and some of the commentators, changing ἡμέτερα into ὑμέτερα, and new modelling the punctuation, make the emperor invite the Asiatics to a comparison of their worship with that of the Christians. Perhaps, the passage is best understood in the sense given in the text, as it is expressive of the common spirit of Paganism, unwilling to suffer the presence of any religion different from its own, and imputing to it whatever mischief may happen. Through this motive, the Egyptians

to fall into despair, or to draw revengeful comparisons between their own worship and that of the Christians; but to increase their attention to the gods. He enforces therefore the injunction which had been given by others before him, namely, that the faith of the Christians was not, in itself, a sufficient ground of persecution; and that an offence against the state was the only crime, of which the tribunals could properly take cognizance. If this order is disobeyed, he directs, that the punishment intended for the Christian who was needlessly accused, shall be inflicted upon the informer.

From this time, however, notwithstanding occasional checks of the vulgar violence by better minds, we meet with the continued and increasing alarms expressed by the Pagans concerning the dangerous nature of Christianity; and Cyprian, Tertullian, Origen,

are said by Diodorus to have sent strangers out of their country,—*ἐὰν μὴ τὸς ἀλλοφύλοὺς μεταστήσωνται, κρίσιν ὐκ ἔσεσθαι τῶν κακῶν.* Frag. 1. 40. vol. 2. ed. Wesseling. It is well known that the Mahometans, and Roman Catholics of our own days, imitate the Pagans in this fanatical persuasion, and that it sometimes leads to violence towards strangers.

Clemens Alexandrinus, and others, afford ample testimony, that any calamity incident to man was deemed a sufficient reason of accusation against the followers of the Gospel. Arnobius, who wrote his disputations about the end of the third century, an age which resounded with these complaints, has made them the express object of his attack. The Pagan reasoners of his days dated the origin of the disasters of the empire from the inauspicious birth of Christianity. Bellona became averse from her once favourite people, and engaged them in hostilities longer and more bloody than before.* The elements themselves partook in promoting the Divine resentment, and either lost their wholesome qualities, or purposely confounded them.

* This is a strange complaint on the part of a restless and blood-thirsty people, whose temple of Janus was shut no more than twice from the foundation of Rome to the reign of Augustus! Oros. Hist. lib. iv. c. 12. It is highly probable that the worship so zealously offered to Bellona by Julian, was intended in some measure to pacify her wrath, and to regain for the empire the favours which had been unhappily interrupted by Christianity! Before his profession of idolatry, he attended the service of the church, lest he should disgust the army; but even then, as Am. Marcellinus tells us, he offered private worship to Bellona,—placata ritu secretiore Bellona; lib. xxi. c. 5.

Nay, the minutest creatures capable of destroying or infesting the means of human subsistence, were secretly instigated to a rival mischief, that revenge might be more variously and convincingly taken on the contemners of the gods! All evil, says Arnobius, is supposed to come in the train of the Gospel; and inordinate bloodshed, pestilence, drought, famine, and tempests, to be its proper consequences. Christianity invited the swarms of locusts. Christianity encouraged the late depredations of the vermin.*

This gives us a view of the sentiments of the Pagans just before the civil establishment of Christianity. After that event, the hatred of those who yet stood aloof from the faith, was probably increased, while the outward expression of it was restrained. Of this a specimen

* Pestilentias, inquiunt, et siccitates, bella, frugum inopiam, locustas, mures, et grandines, résque alias noxias, quibus negotia incursantur humana, Dii nobis important, injuriis vestris exasperati. Adv. Gentes, lib. i. Of the same tendency is the well-known passage of Tertullian;—Adversùm sanguinem innocentium conclamant, pretexentes sanè ad odii defensionem, illam quoque vanitatem, quòd existiment omnis publicæ cladis, omnis popularis incommodi Christianos esse causam. Si Tiberis ascendit ad mœnia;—si Nilus non ascendit in arva,—si cœlum stetit,—si terra movit;—si fames, si lues,—statim Christianos ad leonem. Apol. c. 40.

is afforded in the pleading of Symmachus, to which allusion has already been made, for the public restoration of the antient idolatry.

The Gentile superstition was now falling into discredit and decay, under the mild ascendancy of the Gospel, when, towards the close of the fourth century, a circumstance occurred which revived some of the ancient attachment to it, and led to a solemn discussion of its nature and efficacy. An altar of Victory, which had stood in the vestibule of the Senate-house, to receive the incense offered to it on behalf of the Senators, and to witness their vows for the observance of the laws and the welfare of the state, had been removed* after the empire became Christian. Internal faction now threatened the public peace; and the Barbarians, who, as we shall hereafter more particularly see, had been long formidable to the empire, were also preparing new incursions. Of the apprehension

* It seems to have been removed by Constantius;—Constantius, augustæ memoriæ, nondum sacris initiatus mysteriis, contaminari se putavit, si aram illam videret. Jussit auferri; non jussit reponi. Ambr. Ep. 18. class. 1. Perhaps it was restored by Julian; for we find it again removed by Gratian:—Hæc Romæ à Gratiano sublata sunt, et datis antiquata rescriptis. Ep. 17. ib.

occasioned by this coincidence, an apprehension strengthened by the youth and inexperience of the second Valentinian, advantage was taken by the Pagans of Rome; and Symmachus, the præfect of the city, allowed by all parties to be possessed of superior eloquence, was deputed* by the Gentile part of the senate, to support the cause of idolatry with the emperor, to request the restoration of the altar of Victory,

* Symmachus points out his repeated commission;—*Iterum* me querelarum suarum jussit (Senatus) esse legatum. And Ambrose, in a private letter to Valentinian, (in which he desires a copy of Symmachus's petition, and advises that a reference should be made to the opinion of Theodosius,) mentions a similar attempt two years before;—ante biennium ferme, cùm hæc facere tentarent. It would appear, that, in both these instances, the resolution was partial. In the former, there was a counter-petition from the Christian part of the senate, disclaiming all participation in the affair; and in the latter, the act of a few was imposingly stated as that of the senate at large:—Absit ut hoc Senatus petîsse dicatur: *pauci Gentiles communi utuntur nomine.* Ambr. Ep. 18. In another part of the answer to Symmachus, he points out the majority of the Christian senators:—Hujus aram strui in urbis Romæ curia petunt, hoc est, quò *plures conveniunt Christiani.* The letter to Eugenius mentions two attempts made in the reign of Valentinian, Ep. 57. ib. and in the "Consolation" which Ambrose wrote on his death, there is an earnest and affectionate remembrance of his Christian constancy, amidst the solicitations of the Pagans both in public and private. De Ob. Val.

and the general re-establishment of the antient superstition. His expostulation, inflated and weak, affected and querulous, is to be found among his letters, and in the works of Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who was appointed to answer him; and is refuted, sentence by sentence, in the second book of Prudentius against Symmachus. In a strain of false sentiment and vulgar reasoning, the orator expatiates on the suppression of the ancient rites, which had been so beneficial to the state, and on the growing rigour of the new establishment. The privileges of the Vestal virgins were now discontinued: and the expenses of the sacred ceremonies at the Pagan altars were no longer furnished by the state. The anger of the gods was justly due to this parsimony, and the privation of their honours. Accordingly, a famine had ensued, of a nature unknown to the empire before the suppression of the antient worship!* Lest his own remonstrance should fail of effect,

* Quid tale provinciæ pertulerunt, quum religionum ministros honor publicus pasceret? Non sunt hæc vitia terrarum; nihil imputemus austris; nec rubigo segetibus obfuit, nec avena fruges necavit; sacrilegio annus exaruit; necesse enim fuit perire omnibus, quod religionibus negabatur. Sym. pro Patr. Sacr.

he introduces Rome herself regretting the glories of her Paganism, and lamenting her recent wrongs; and finally represents the deified parent of the young sovereign looking from the clouds with commiseration on the tears of the priests, now deprived of the privileges which his beneficence had continued to them.

The arguments of Ambrose in answer to this scenic declamation are directed against the three principal points maintained by his adversary.* He denies that the Pagan rites were at any time effectual to the welfare of the state. Italy and Rome itself had fallen into the hands of the enemy, while idolatry was in its full establishment; and events had shewn, that, instead of protecting their votaries, the gods had often been indebted to them for their own safety. Against the claim, that the antient privileges and immunities of the priests and vestals ought to be restored, he argues with equal success: When did a Pagan sovereign rear an altar to

* Tria igitur in relatione suâ vir clarissimus præfectus urbis proposuit, quæ valida putavit:—quòd Roma veteres, ut ait, suos cultus requirat; et quòd sacerdotibus suis virginibúsque Vestalibus emolumenta tribuenda sint; et quòd emolumentis sacerdotum negatis, fames sequuta publica sit. Ambr. Ep. 18. class. 1.

Christ? what had been the constant treatment of the believers of the Gospel at their hands, but contempt, and stripes, and death? We, more mild and tolerant, withhold from Paganism, only that which cannot be granted to it without sin. The Gentiles yet sacrifice in their own temples; and the statues of gods and heroes are permitted to adorn their baths and porticoes.* Let this suffice. A Christian senator must not be constrained to witness an Heathen sacrifice; nor can a Christian sovereign, consistently with his faith and salvation, do honour to any other than a Christian altar. Lastly, he bestows deserved ridicule on the assertion, that the refusal of the stipends to the Pagan officiators was the cause of the famine. The gods have taken several years to consider of their vengeance. The late scarcity too was only partial; and the present year, in which the preposterous complaint is uttered, is a season of unusual plenty!† He concludes with an

* The prohibitory law of Theodosius was yet wanting for the suppression of these practices. Leg. 12 de Paganis.

† Upon this he asks, Si superiore anno Deorum suorum injurias vindicatas putant, cur præsenti anno contemptui fuere? ib.

earnest adjuration, that the prince will not connive at those idolatrous practices in others, of which he cannot himself partake. He infers the necessity of a purer faith to the more mature age of the empire, points out the unhappy end of the most illustrious among the Pagan sovereigns and commanders, declares the innocence of his own views in the debate, and exhorts his young sovereign to persevere in the faith, to complete the work which the first Valentinian had left imperfect, and not to swerve from the path which the good example of Gratian had prescribed to him.

Prudentius employs some of the same arguments in his two books against Symmachus. A few specimens of these shall also be given, in order to convey some notion of his manner. In the first book he lays the foundation of his Christian cause in an exposure of the meanness and pollutions of the Heathen superstition. He draws portraits of the older gods, sometimes with the stateliness and point of Claudian; and exposes their lewd and immoral exploits, as recorded by the Pagan poets. He then passes to the later deifications of the genius of Rome itself; of its emperors, and their impure connections; to the elements represented as

gods, and the demons worshipped with cruelty and blood.*

Having thus prepared his argument, he more particularly replies to Symmachus: When did the statue of Victory procure victory? Roman valour was the antient cause of Roman triumph. The public welfare therefore depends not on imaginary protectors. The Heathen gods are helpless in themselves, and cannot give assistance to others. He is the only Almighty who is able to punish the wicked in soul and body, who can reward them that obey him with the blessings of the "life that now is, and of that which is to come."† In him Rome now happily believes. Nor does she abandon her maxims of government by placing her present faith in him. Her practice has ever been to

* Respice terrifici scelerata sacraria Ditis,
Cui cadit infaustâ fusus Gladiator arenâ:
Hæ sunt deliciæ Jovis Infernalis;——
Lib. i.

† ———— bona non tantum præsentia donat,
Sed ventura etiam;————

He contrasts the true God with the pagan deities, as if they professed to give only temporal good.

Æterna Æternus tribuit,—mortalia confert
Mortalis,—divina Deus,—peritura caducus.
Lib. ii.

adopt new gods in the extension of her empire.* Well then may she at length acknowledge the great and good Being who alone can protect and bless her. Here, he introduces the true God declaring his own supreme properties, and asserting, in opposition to the character of the Heathen idols, his self-existence, and the free and absolute exercise of his sole and undivided power. He imitates also the manner of his antagonist. Rome, now Christian, is therefore called in to refute the superior prerogatives falsely claimed for her antient Paganism. She blames the restless spirit which formerly prompted her to incessant war against the surrounding nations, and piously wishes to live hereafter in peace. But, if the enemy will not permit her to be at rest, she is yet able to avenge her wrongs, through the Almighty Power which supports her. In her Pagan times she had suffered repeated disasters in the field, and the

* ——— spoliis sibimet nova numina fecit,
Numina, quæ patriis cum mœnibus eruta, nullum
Præsidium potuere suis afferre sacellis.

Ib.

This is one of the accommodating arguments which are so frequent in the early Christian writers, and which were extorted from them by the peculiar circumstances of the times.

Gauls had possessed themselves of her Capitol. But now she can repel her foes at a distance; and the recent defeat of the Gothic invaders proves that military triumphs divinely wait upon her Christian arms.

The hostility of spirit which had called forth these replies from the Christian writers, was the more ready to appear as the public danger increased. The last instance of it which requires to be mentioned, previously to the capture of Rome by Alaric, occurs in the invasion of Italy by the barbarian Rhadagaisus. He was represented as particularly formidable to a Christian state, on account of his open and fervent attachment to the worship of the gods. They had been unjustly proscribed at Rome. They had felt the affront which had been offered to them, and were now openly preparing to revenge it. The city resounded with these outcries as the enemy advanced towards it.*

* Hoc igitur Romanis arcibus imminente, fit omnium Paganorum concursus, hostem adesse cum utique viriam copiâ, tum maximè præsidio Deorum potentem; urbem autem ideo destitutam, et maturè perituram, quia Deos et sacra perdiderit. Magnis querelis ubique agitur, et continuò de sacris repetendis celebrandisque tractatur. *Fervent tota urbe blasphemiæ;* vulgo nunc Christi, tanquam lues aliqua præsentium temporum, quotidiè gravatur. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 37.

The Pagans were every where in commotion, and vehemently demanded the restoration of idolatry, as the only means of their security. The name of Christ was openly blasphemed; and his followers were reviled as the authors of all the dangers which threatened the empire. In a contest with a Pagan enemy, no safety was to be expected for the state, unless it were defended by the gods its antient protectors: they were therefore to be again acknowledged ere the hostile armies should make their appearance before the walls. The vanity of these reasonings was soon proved by the event. The dreaded invader, as we shall hereafter see, was easily defeated; and Rome stood secure, notwithstanding the displeasure of the gods at the establishment of Christianity.

With such a disposition in the very nature of Paganism to impute the misfortunes of the times to the profession of the faith of Christ, and to justify its own violence through its self-opinion, it was not to be expected, that so afflicting an event as the actual capture of the "eternal city," (so she was fondly called,) should be unproductive of calumny. Indeed we find, that the passions of the Pagan party were inflamed by it in an unusual manner. From

numberless passages in the writings produced by that catastrophe, it appears, that society was long embittered with complaints and reproaches, and that the idolaters engaged in eager disputes with the Christians concerning the common calamity, whenever business or accident furnished them with an opportunity of remonstrance. That these personal criminations were successfully refuted at the moment, we cannot doubt; but their frequency and violence made something more than a private vindication necessary to the character of the Gospel itself. This necessity was also increased by the gross ignorance of their own history which marked the Roman people. They knew nothing of past events, and were, therefore, ready to receive the most perverse impressions, from those which happened in their own times. We find too, that the better instructed dissembled their knowledge, and purposely abstained from applying any correction to the popular prejudices: and thus was the Gospel equally calumniated through ignorance, and the malicious silence of intelligence itself.*

* Sunt qui eorum studiis liberalibus instituti amant historiam, quâ facillimè ista noverunt. Sed ut nobis ineruditorum turbas infestissimas reddant, se nôsse dissimulant, atque hoc apud

The representations thus made by the Christian writers of the ignorance which prevailed among the people of Rome, are confirmed by the testimony of the Pagans. On account of the dearness and scarcity of manuscripts, there was very little reading, and consequently, but a small portion of liberal knowledge. This state of the public mind was accompanied, as it generally is, with pursuits of the most debased and profligate kinds. Ammianus Marcellinus, in his description of the manners of Rome in the latter part of the fourth century, informs us, that some, even of the first quality in the state, hated learning as if it were poison;* and that

vulgus nituntur, clades quibus per certa intervalla locorum et temporum genus humanum oportet affligi, causâ accidere nominis Christiani. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. ii. c. 3. Orosius, in his dedication to Augustin, states the same cause as impelling him to write:—Cum præterita aut obliviscantur aut nesciant, præsentia tantum tempora veluti malis extra solitum infestissima, ob hoc solum, quod creditur Christus et colitur Deus, idola autem minus coluntur, infamant.

* Quidam detestantes ut venena doctrinas, Juvenalem et Marium Maximum curatiore studio legunt, nulla volumina præter hæc in profundo otio contrectantes. Lib. xxviii. c. 4. M. Maximus is mentioned by Spartian, in the life of Adrian. He lived in the reign of Macrinus, by whom he was made præfect of the city.

their whole reading, when vanity or even idleness suggested it, was confined to Juvenal, and Marius Maximus, who wrote the lives of he Cæsars. In general the higher classes were given up to sloth, effeminacy, pride, and selfishness. And as to the common people, they seemed to live only for the brutal purposes of quarrelling, gaming, drunkenness, debauchery, and, above all, for the amusements of the Circus,* their temple, their home, their only place of assembly, the sole object of their desires.

In public refutation, therefore, of the false and blasphemous accusations promoted, by these and other causes, against the Gospel, the zeal of Augustin† planned the memorable treatise "Of the City of God;" one of the most valuable works which the piety and literature of the early Christian writers have transmitted to us. He had now published the first ten books,‡

* Hi omne quod vivunt vino et tesseris impendunt, et lustris, et voluptatibus, et spectaculis; iisque templum, et habitaculum, et concio, et cupitorum spes omnis Circus est Maximus. Amm. Marcell. ib.

† Ego exardescens zelo domûs Dei adversùs eorum blasphemias vel errores, libros de Civitate Dei scribere institui. Aug. Retract. lib. ii. c. 43.

‡ Quorum jam decem orientes radii toto orbi fulserunt. Oros. Dedic. ad Aug. The books were published separately, as we find from several passages.

when judging the Presbyter Orosius a fit assistant in his purpose, he enjoined him to form his collection of History against the Pagans. The object of this work was to compile* from all former histories and annals, whatever calamities, common or extraordinary, natural or civil, were recorded in the experience of mankind. Nor was this undertaken through the melancholy love of contemplating a mass of human evils; but for the sake of convincing the Roman people, that the disasters, of which they complained as unexampled in their nature, or brought upon their own age and nation by the malignant influence of Christianity, were long since familiar, not only to the rest of the world, but to themselves.

One circumstance attending this work must have struck the Pagans with novelty and surprise. The Gentile writers had commonly begun their histories from Ninus,† as if the earlier

* Præceperas ergo ut ex omnibus historiarum atque annalium fastis, quæcunque aut bellis gravia, aut corrupta morbis, aut fame tristia, aut terrarum motibus terribilia, aut inundationibus aquarum insolita, aut eruptionibus ignium metuenda, aut ictibus fulminum plagísque grandinum sæva, vel etiam parricidiis flagitiísque misera per transacta retro sæcula reperîssem, ordinato breviter voluminis textu explicarem. Oros. ib.

† Omnes propemodùm, tam apud Græcos quàm apud Lati-

state of man were unknown to them, or were utterly unworthy of research or record; as if the human race had no discoverable origin, or had hitherto lived on an equality with the brutes of the field, and had not attained civilization sufficient for notice, till Ninus presented to the world the first specimen of orderly and rational government.

Orosius detects the fallacy of these opinions, points out the comparatively recent establishment of the too celebrated Assyrian empire, the long lapse of time previous to it, and the nature of the more ancient governments. He carries the minds of his Pagan readers to the Divine creation of man, and endeavours to impress upon them the fall of Adam, as the point from which began to flow the miseries of the world; the first chastisements of sin. Hence he infers the continual superintendance of a Providence which acts by judgments as well as

nos, studiosi ad scribendum viri, initium scribendi à Nino, Beli filio, rege Assyriorum, fecere; qui cum opinione cæcâ mundi originem creaturámque hominum sine initio credi velint, cœpisse ab hoc regna belláque definiunt; quasi verò eatenùs humanum genus ritu pecudum vixerit, et tunc primùm veluti ad novam providentiam concussum suscitatúmque evigilârit. Oros. Hist. lib. i. c. 1.

mercies, and executes its everlasting purposes on the sons of men, under all the circumstances of life. Finally, he turns their attention to Christ, the Saviour of the world, and exhorts them to look by faith towards Him, in whom alone the sin of Adam could find its remedy; and to repent of the evils which the impious persecution of his church upon earth had brought upon the Roman empire, through the righteous vengeance of Heaven.

Augustin is a writer of an higher order.* While he reverts to the former history of Rome, and of the world at large, he encounters the Pagans with an animated and interesting discussion of the radical meanness and viciousness of polytheism; the equal folly of the popular mythology, and the philosophic religion of the Romans. This he accomplishes, with perfect success, in the first ten books. In the twelve which follow, he proceeds to raise his Christian superstructure on the ruins of Paganism. Beginning, therefore, from the situation of man in

* Let not this observation deprive Orosius of the reputation so justly due to him. Mosheim calls him a writer in primis ætatis suæ erudito. Dissert. Ecclesiast. vol. i. p. 138. But he is inferior to Augustin, in originality and comprehensiveness of mind.

Paradise, he traces the progress of Revelation through the succeeding ages, its continued existence, notwithstanding occasional restrictions of its extent, till the appearance of Christ, in whom the world was to believe.

From the accomplishment of the purposes of God upon earth, he passes to the final judgment of mankind at the last day; describes the condemnation and punishment of the enemies of God, and expatiates on the everlasting happiness of the blessed; when Christ shall have given up the kingdom of his mediatorship to the Father, and God shall be "all in all."

But it is only the first part of the work which applies to the subject before us. And, without entering into any of those opinions which narrow or degrade the Christian system of Augustin; in no writer, can we find a more copious, or more interesting account of the state of Paganism in the age in which he lived.

This account is the more curious, as it shows us the opinions and practices of polytheism after the civil establishment of Christianity in Rome; and holds up to our eyes a picture of idolatry, when now declining, and indeed fast verging to its extinction.

The religion of Christ had obtained its gra-

dual success through an invincible "patience in well doing," and through sufferings of every kind. Paganism lost its ancient hold of empire, and with that its principal means of subsistence. It was now expiring under the powerful ascendancy of reason and faith. Yet it retained its characteristic fierceness. Like one of its profligate and audacious sons described by Sallust, it cast a malignant frown at the hand which smote it, and impotently threatened revenge amid the struggles of death itself —*paulum etiam spirans, ferociamque animi, quam habuerat vivus, in vultu retinens.*

CHAPTER III.

THE REAL CAUSES WHICH DISPOSED THE EMPIRE TO ITS FALL, TRACED TO ITS HEATHEN DEPRAVITY...GOTHS... THEIR CAPTURE OF THE CITY PREPARED BY EARLIER SUCCESSES WHILE THE EMPIRE WAS PAGAN...VINDICATION OF THE GOSPEL.

THE subject has been hitherto discussed through a reference to the character and temper of Paganism. We have seen, that its pretension to reward its votaries with temporal prosperity, was the united effect of superstition and malice; superstition, enamoured of its own gods, and malice, enraged at the successful propagation of the Gospel. Hence it has appeared, that the argument so passionately urged against the faith of Christ, on account of the capture of Rome by the Barbarians, was unfounded. A similar spirit of animosity and crimination had prevailed in earlier times; and turbulence and intolerance were the common features of idolatry. The success of Alaric, therefore, was not to be imputed to the recent establishment of Christianity.

It will now be proper to ascertain the real causes of those temporal evils which ended in the overthrow of the Western empire, and which were falsely attributed to our holy religion.

For this purpose it is necessary to refer to the Roman history. This will teach us, that the seeds of the public misfortunes were sown by Rome herself, in a state of heathenism; and that, notwithstanding appearances, the strength of the empire was effectually broken before the government became Christian.

I intend, therefore, to lay before you some of those circumstances which predisposed the empire to its fall; and some of those earlier successes of the Gothic nations, which naturally led to their final possession of Italy.

When Christ began his ministry upon earth, the power of the empire seemed to be at its height. Its boundaries had been fixed by Augustus, at a triumphant extent: its internal troubles were appeased; and its supreme dominion was fully acknowledged by the subject nations. To these appearances of prosperity nothing was wanting but permanence; and this the Pagans fondly promised themselves from the supposed power of their gods, whose past

protection of their country was habitually assumed as a certain pledge of the happiness which awaited it in ages yet to come.

But a secret blow had been given to the power of Rome, the consequences of which might be disguised, but could not be averted. That relaxation of principle which began before the third Punic war, increased with a fatal rapidity, after the too prosperous conclusion of it. Sallust, who seems to confess the existence of an earlier tendency to depravity, dates the extraordinary growth of the civil disasters of the state, from the overthrow of Carthage.* A rapacious pursuit of wealth now took place; and the success with which it was unhappily attended, soon led to a profuse indulgence of vicious pleasures. This never ceased, but profligately grew in proportion to the decay of the empire, to which indeed it materially contributed.

From private degeneracy, necessarily arose public corruption. The unprincipled acquisition of immoderate riches was followed by the mad and insatiable love of power; and the com-

* Discordia, et avaritia, atque ambitio, et cætera secundis rebus oriri sueta mala, post Carthaginis excidium *maximè* secuta sunt. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. ii. c. 18.

mon tranquillity was sacrificed to the desperate efforts of ambitious chiefs contending for the sovereignty of their country. Concord, says Augustin,* could not consist with a corrupt prosperity, and the extinction of an enemy which had so long exercised the patience and the valour of Rome. Seditions began, which were soon increased to civil wars. And now it appeared that the loss of principle was more destructive than foreign hostility. They who had hitherto feared mischief only from the enemy, were suddenly overwhelmed by the contentions of their fellow citizens. The vicious love of dominion which had hitherto actuated the people at large, seemed now to centre in the

* Deletâ Carthagine, magno scilicet terrore Romanæ Reipublicæ repulso et extincto, tanta de rebus prosperis orta mala continuò subsequuta sunt, ut, corruptâ diruptâque concordiâ, priùs sævis cruentísque seditionibus, deinde mox, malarum connexione causarum, bellis etiam civilibus tantæ strages ederentur, tantus sanguis effunderetur, tantâ cupiditate proscriptionum ac rapinarum, ferveret immanitas, ut Romani illi, qui, vitâ integriore, mala metuebant ab hostibus, perditâ integritate vitæ, crudeliora paterentur à civibus; eâque ipsa libido dominandi, quæ inter vitia generis humani immoderatior inerat universo R. P. posteaquàm in paucis potentioribus vicit, obtritos fatigatósque cæteros etiam jugo servitutis oppressit. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 30.

inflamed bosoms of a few aspiring chiefs; and the fatal success of these was the subjugation of all other men.

Cruelty, disdainful of every restraint on its sanguinary purposes, and regardless of the common welfare in its determined execution of them, was the natural attendant on these struggles for political ascendancy; and no safety was supposed to be attained, till every opponent was cut off, by poison or the sword, by open violence or secret treachery. Nay, power, no longer disputed by a rival, indulged a wantonness of rage, and drew a savage delight from the blood of friends and foes sacrificed together. We are informed by Valerius Maximus, that the ears, and the hearts of the people of Rome, were pierced at once by the expiring cries of the four legions,* which had thrown themselves on the mercy of Sylla, and were, in consequence, deliberately murdered. To these Orosius adds some thousands of other victims, not only of the quiet and unoffending citizens, but even of the party of Sylla himself!† Such

* Quarum lamentabiles quiritatus trepidæ civitatis aures receperunt. Lib. ix. c. 2. In the epitome of Livy, lib. 88, the number is said to have been eight thousand.

† Plurimi tunc quoque, ut non dicam innocentes, sed etiam

indeed was the indiscriminate ferociousness of this monster, whom Plutarch occasionally favours on account of his attachment to Grecian literature; and whom Valerius Maximus, though he sometimes brands him with the name of Hannibal, yet compliments with the virtues of a Scipio, that one of his principal friends* openly reproached him with a disposition which would leave no difference between peace and war, and which threatened the utter extinction of society.

But the circumstance chiefly to be observed, is, that these ruinous consequences did not flow from the contentions alone; the accommodations were almost equally destructive with the disputes! It was the common character of both the triumvirates, that they were founded alike in perfidy and blood. In the first, Cæsar promoted the reconciliation of his colleagues, that he might more effectually ruin those friends whom they basely abandoned to his vengeance.

ipsius Sullanæ partis occisi sunt, quos fuisse plusquàm novem millia ferunt. Hist. lib. v. c. 21.

* Igitur cunctis jam, quod singuli timebant, apertè frementibus, Q. Catulus (Plutarch says it was C. Metellus) palàm Sullæ dixit, Cum quibus tandem victuri sumus, si in bello armatos, in pace inermes occidimus? Oros. Hist. lib. v. c. 21.

In the second, this profligacy was more openly avowed. With the scorn of every motive but the love of power, Anthony* placed on the same roll of condemnation, Cicero his enemy, and L. Cæsar his uncle; and this during the life of his own mother! Lepidus, perhaps, surpassed him in this bloody infamy; and, actuated by the same motives, was content to throw the name of Paullus his brother, into the common list of proscription and death! These were the new features of malignity engendered by the civil wars; and not only were common justice and humanity sacrificed, but friendship, hatred, affection, and consanguinity, were all confounded in the insane pursuit of lawless and unhallowed power.

In a subsequent age, when the mild spirit of Christianity had softened the asperity of civil contentions, and shortened their duration, these horrors were advantageously remembered; and Augustin, in his refutation of the calumnies of the Pagans, has well contrasted the successes

* Ibi Antonius Tullium Ciceronem, inimicum suum; ibi L. Cæsarem, avunculum suum; et (quod exaggerando sceleri accessit) vivâ matre, proscripserat: ibi Lepidus et Paullum fratrem suum in eundem proscriptorum gregem conjecerat. Oros. Hist. lib. vi. c. 18.

of Theodosius, with those of the sanguinary and revengeful leaders now mentioned. With that great captain, equally distinguished by his valour and his faith, victory was the certain termination of all hostility. The children even of his Pagan enemies, that had fled for refuge to the churches, he piously preserved.* Instead of offering them up the victims of ambition or cruelty, he converted them to Christianity. He caused them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; and protected with his power those whom he had saved by his charity. This was a conduct far above the chiefs of Heathen Rome; and it was the characteristic of Cinna and Marius, and others engaged, like them, in public contentions, to destroy with fury, or betray with treachery, to confound all the distinctions of nature and society, and to continue the effects of hostility amid the professions of peace and friendship!

Out of these circumstances of horror and desolation, naturally grew that form of govern-

* Inimicorum etiam filios, quos non ipsius jussus sed belli abstulerat impetus, etiam nondum Christianos ad ecclesiam confugientes, Christianos hâc occasione fieri voluit, et Christianâ charitate dilexit; nec privavit rebus, sed auxit honoribus. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 26.

ment which was established in Rome at the time chosen by Divine wisdom for the appearance of our Saviour upon earth. The people anxiously looked for a tranquillity which had been so long denied to them, and were willing to believe that they had recovered their happiness in the imperial authority recently imposed upon them. But vice had now made too long and desolating a progress in public and private; and a government wholly depending on the personal qualities of the emperor, could offer little chance of benefit to subjects themselves corrupted. Accordingly, it was soon found, that the new despotism did but derive an increased malignity from the extinction of the efficacy of all restrictive institutions; and the people were confined to the helpless endurance of those evils which are sure to flow from tyranny, and to revenge the folly and depravity which gave it birth.

But though the people of Rome had to lament the failure of their expectations, the purpose of the Gospel was answered. This is a circumstance, on which the Christian writers fondly dwell. The long and successful labours of kings and consuls were finally vested in the

sole and undisputed sway of Augustus;* and in the settlement of the empire, and the wide extent of its territory, they hail the preparations divinely permitted in the kingdom of the earth; for the more free and effectual agency of the faith of Christ. It has been already observed, that a general controul was exercised by the government of Rome over the Greeks and Jews, and that these nations were not at liberty to act against the Gospel at all times, as their malice suggested. Generally speaking, licence for persecution was to be obtained from the sovereign power, which often checked them, and rescued the Christians from their violence. If, therefore, the neighbouring states had preserved their independence, and with that the liberty of opposing the progress of the Gospel, without respect to the will of a superior, greater impediments might yet have awaited the propagation

* Hoc (imperium) per reges et consules diù provectum, postquàm Asiæ, Africæ, atque Europæ potitum est, ad unum Imperatorem congessit (Deus);—ut in magno silentio ac pace latissimâ novi nominis gloria, et adnuntiatæ salutis velox fama percurreret; vel etiam, ut discipulis ejus, per diversas gentes euntibus, ultróque per cunctos salutis dona offerentibus, obeundi ac disserendi, quippe Romanis civibus, inter cives Romanos, esset tuta libertas. Oros. Hist. lib. vi. c. 1.

of it. But these obstacles were removed by the universal ascendancy of Rome. Its subjects, converted to the faith, had a larger space in which to display their zeal for the conversion of others. They had also a freer course; and a path was now opened to them through nations, which, however discordant from each other in language and modes of religion, acknowledged the sway of one common government, and were to embrace one common faith.* The privilege of citizenship was now also rapidly extending itself, and must have been favourable to the extension of the Gospel. And the Roman name itself was some security to the teachers of the new doctrine. This we learn from the example

* Prudentius dwells on this as one of the purposes grafted by Providence on the prosperity which had attended the Roman arms.

Vis dicam, quæ causa tuos, Romane, labores
In tantum extulerit?——
Discordes linguis populos, et dissona cultu
Regna volens sociare Deus, subjungier uni
Imperio, quicquid tractabile moribus esset,
Concordique jugo retinacula mollia ferre
Constituit, quo corda hominum conjuncta teneret
Relligionis amor; nec enim fit copula Christo
Digna, nisi implicitas societ mens unica gentes.

Lib. ii. cont. Sym.

of St. Paul; for the officer, who had bound him at Jerusalem, was "afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman."* These then were some of the secular circumstances, which, under the blessing of Providence, facilitated the extension of the Gospel, within a short time, to the most distant parts of the empire. Fearful indeed, as we have already seen, were the trials to which the faith was exposed, notwithstanding these preparations. Yet it was destined to succeed; and its influence, finally reaching the seat of sovereignty, was to be the seal of the Christian triumph over the world at large.

Meanwhile, the imperial authority went on, unconscious of the sacred purposes attached to it by the Divine hand, and accomplishing on its subjects those civil evils which resulted from its own constitution. The foundation of the miseries of the empire was laid in the adopted house of Augustus; and the inquiry into the early causes of its degradation and ruin might perhaps stop at the character of Nero, the last of that fatal family. But, though the succession was broken, the same mischief continued. Most of the Roman or Italian Cæsars (I gladly except

* Acts xxii. 29.

Vespasian and Titus) were worthy to administer a government which had dropped from the hands of Nero; and rarely have the annals of mankind furnished the view of a viciousness more loathsome, or a tyranny more insupportable, than in the line which ended with Domitian.

After the extinction of the first twelve Cæsars, a few instances of virtue and vigour appeared, for the consolation of the empire, in the persons of Nerva, Adrian, Trajan, and some others. It is observed, however, by Aurelius Victor, who marks the Cretan extraction of the former of these sovereigns, that Rome had derived its principal benefit from the virtues of those who were born beyond her walls.* But, notwithstanding the outward lustre which adorned it, a lustre never more dazzling than in the reign of Trajan, the real strength of the state was secretly enfeebled. This soon appeared in the disastrous fortunes of his successors. Such indeed was the general debasement of principle, that the occasional interposition of better sentiments and sounder plans of policy served ra-

* Mihi audienti multa legentíque planè compertum est, urbem Romam externorum virtute, atque insitivis artibus præcipuè crevisse. In Domit.

ther to excite revenge, than to produce reform. In vain would Pertinax* revive the stricter morals of the ancient Romans, and appear the rival of the Curii and Fabricii. In vain did Severus† attempt the restoration of military discipline. In vain did Aurelian‡ strengthen the walls of Rome, while he enlarged their circuit, and maintain with honour the distant interests of the empire. The virtue and courage of these princes outran the qualities of the age. They were fatal to their possessors; and murder was ever at hand to revenge the cause of lawlessness and rapine.

From the general weakness and wickedness which infected the government and the people, necessarily resulted the neglect and injury of the provinces. This mischief began indeed from the destruction of Carthage, and raged with

* Hic doctrinæ omnis ac moribus antiquissimis, immodicè parcus, Curios æquaverat Fabriciósque. Eum milites, quibus, exhausto jam perditóque orbe, satis videtur nihil, fœdè jugulavêre. A. Victor in Pert.

† Tumultuantes legionum plerasque constantissimè abjecit, quod in præsens gloriæ, mox exitio datum. Id. in Sev.

‡ His tot tantísque prosperè gestis, nè unquam quæ per Gallienum evenerant, acciderent, muris urbem quàm validissimis laxiore ambitu circumsepsit:—ministri scelere circumventus interiit. Id. in Aurel.

great violence during the latter age of the republic. But as yet the power of Rome was not openly affected by it; nor were the oppressions of the proconsuls immediately followed by the attempts of the enemy. At length, however, this took place. Plundered and tortured by the hand from which they had justly expected protection, the provinces became the easier prey of the invader; and the common safety was exposed to continual and increasing dangers from the enemies of the empire. The extortions not only of the proconsuls, but of their wives and attendants; the compelled services of the unhappy subjects, and the jealous system of information which was established through the most distant parts of the state, excited disaffection and revolt. What the declamation of Cicero had exposed in Verres; what the satire of Juvenal had lashed in the profligate rapacity of Marius; now became common history. Salvian, who lived to see and record the dreadful effects of this corrupt policy, affords the best commentary on the alarm and indignation of those writers. He presents us with alternate pictures of the depravity of the Romans, and the just successes of the Barbarians. The rapine and cruelty of the governors

were the true causes of the rebellion of the provinces; and the Goths and Vandals owed their easy possession of Gaul and Africa, to the injustice and inhumanity of Rome.*

But before these dangers reached their extremity, one favourable circumstance occurred, which deserves particular notice. Byzantium, which had been built by a Spartan king, when Rome was in its infancy, was destined to protect its declining years, to revive its glory under another name, and amidst the acknowledgment of a better faith. The seat of empire was

* Inter hæc vastantur pauperes, viduæ gemunt, orphani proculcantur. Itaque passim vel ad Gothos, vel ad Bagaudas, vel ad alios ubique dominantes barbaros migrant, et migrâsse non pœnitet.—Of the Bagaudæ themselves he says; Vocamus rebelles, vocamus perditos, quos esse compulimus criminosos. Quibus enim aliis rebus Bagaudæ facti sunt nisi iniquitatibus nostris, nisi improbitatibus judicum, nisi eorum proscriptionibus et rapinis, qui exactionis publicæ nomen in quæstûs proprii emolumenta verterunt, et indictiones tributarias prædas suas esse fecerunt?—De Gub. Dei, lib. v.—Such facts as these make us remember, with increased interest and admiration, the warning given by Juvenal to his country:

Curandum imprimis, nè magna injuria fiat
Fortibus et miseris. Tollas licèt omne, quod usquam est
Auri, atque argenti; scutum, gladiúmque relinques,
Et jacula, et galeam; *spoliatis arma supersunt.*

Sat. 8.

opportunely removed to this place, augmented and beautified, and now called Constantinople.* A rescue was thus obtained for at least one branch of Roman power; and it is the just delight of the Christian writers to extol the felicity bestowed by Providence on a foundation better and more pure than that of the Pagan capital.† They point out the rapid growth of the new city, equal to Rome in her splendour, but without the experience of her crimes and miseries; and they dwell with rapture on the praises of a daughter establishment freed from the superstitions and pollutions of its corrupted mother; an establishment wholly dedicated to the true God, where no temple arose for the worship of the demons, no statue obtained a place to the impious honour of deified mortals.‡

* Hæc autem Byzantium, quondam à Pausaniâ, rege Spartanorum, condita, post autem à Constantino, Christiano Principe, in majus aucta, et Constantinopolis dicta, gloriosissimi nunc imperii sedes et caput totius Orientis est. Oros. Hist. lib. iii. c. 13. A. Marcellinus calls it an Attic Colony; lib. xxii. c. 8.

† Quæ sola expers idolorum, ad hoc, brevissimo tempore, condita à Christiano Imperatore, provecta est, ut sola Romæ, tot sæculis miseriísque provectæ, formâ et potentiâ meritò possit æquari. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 28.

‡ Cui etiam (Constantino) condere civitatem Romano Imperio sociam, velut ipsius Romæ filiam, sed sine aliquo Dæmonum

But meanwhile, the fate of the antient city could not be averted or delayed; and the Barbarians, who had long since made successful inroads into the distant parts of the empire, were now preparing to pour into Italy, and to seize upon Rome itself. Let us attend to their history, endeavour briefly to ascertain their situation, name, and origin, and point out some of those early successes which prepared the way for their final occupation of the West.

The situation of the Getæ is said by Strabo,* and other geographers, to have been in that part of Europe beyond the Ister, which was included between the Euxine Sea, the River Tyras to the North, and the Pathissus to the West. We are informed too, not only by poets,

templo simulacróque concessit (Deus). Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 25. His great qualities were acknowledged by Pagans as well as Christians. This appears from the general lamentation for his death—quod sane P. R. ægerrimè tulit, quippe cujus armis, legibus, clementi imperio, quasi novatam urbem Romanam arbitrarentur. A. Victor in Const.

* Μεταξὺ δὲ τῆς Ποντίκης θαλάττης τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἴστρου ἐπὶ Τύραν, ἢ τῶν Γέτων ἐρημία προκειται. lib. vii. p. 211. Cluverius states this as the common opinion concerning the Getæ;—Quorum sedem ultra Danubium fuisse, inter Pathissum amnem atque mare Ponticum, ex adverso Pannoniæ Mœsiæque, satis è Strabone, Ptolemæo, atque aliis, in aperto est. Germ. Antiq. lib. iii.

but historians and divines, whose attention was particularly directed to the history of the Gothic invaders of the empire, that they were the same people to whom the Greeks had given the earlier name of Getæ. This appears from the testimony of Claudian and Ausonius, and from a number of passages in Spartian, Jerom, Orosius, Procopius, and others.

The Romans, however, generally gave the name of Daci to the Barbarians beyond the lower Danube, whether from the observation that the Daci were of the family of the Getæ,* or that they both used the same language.† But the Greeks, as we have just seen, placed the Getæ towards the mouths of the Ister, while the Daci were removed to the West. Different names were also given to the river, according to the difference of these settlements. Where the Daci had possession of the banks, it was called Danubius; where it washed, or per-

* Daci soboles Getarum sunt. Justin. Hist. 32. 3.

† This is also observed by Strabo—ὁμόγλωττοι δ' εἰσὶν οἱ Γέται τοῖς Δάκοις. lib. vii. p. 211. Procopius marks the same language in all the Gothic tribes that invaded the Roman empire—φωνή τε αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ μία, Γοτθικὴ λεγομένη. De Bell. Vand. lib. i. c. 2. He thinks that they were all of the same stock, and obtained different names from their generals or chiefs.

vaded the seat of the Getæ, it had the name of Ister.*

The origin of the Goths has also given rise to much difference of opinion. Strabo states the persuasion of the Greeks, that the Getæ were a Thracian people. He says too, that they and the Mysians, who had the same origin, were formerly inhabitants of both sides of the Ister.† At the time however of the expedition of Alexander against the Thracians beyond the Hæmus, they were no longer on the south of the river: for, being unable to make an impression on the island Peuce, to which the leaders of the Triballi had fled for refuge, yet willing to leave behind him some terror of his name, he passed the Ister, and made a short incursion into the territory of the Getæ.‡ On the other hand,

* Καὶ γὰρ τῷ ποταμῷ τὰ μὲν ἄνω καὶ πρὸς ταῖς πηγαῖς μέρη, μέχρι τῶν καταράκτων, Δανούβιον προσηγόρευον, ἃ μάλιστα διὰ τῶν Δάκων φέρεται· τὰ δὲ κάτω, μέχρι τῷ Πόντῳ τὰ περὶ τὸς Γέτας, καλοῦσιν Ἴστρον. Strab. lib. vii. p. 211.

† Οἱ τοίνυν Ἕλληνες, τὸς Γέτας, Θράκας ὑπελάμβανον· ᾤκουν δ' ἐφ' ἑκάτερα τῷ Ἴστρῳ καὶ ὅτοι, καὶ οἱ Μυσοὶ, Θράκες ὄντες· καὶ αὐτοὶ, καὶ ὅς νῦν Μυσὸς καλοῦσιν. lib. vii. p. 204.

‡ Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Φιλίππου, κατὰ τὴν ἐπὶ Θράκας τὸς ὑπὲρ τοῦ Αἵμου στρατιὰν ἐμβαλὼν εἰς Τριβαλλὸς, ὁρῶν μέχρι τοῦ Ἴστρου καθήκοντας, καὶ τῆς ἐν ἀυτῷ νήσου Πεύκης, τὰ πέραν δὲ Γέτας ἔχοντας, ἀφῖχθαι λέγεται μέχρι δεῦρο· καὶ ἐς μὲν τὴν νῆσον

the later ecclesiastical writers generally call the Goths a Scythian race.* But Cluverius wages war against all the testimony which would identify the Goths with the Getæ. He asserts therefore, that the Goths of the later authors were the Gotones mentioned by Tacitus, and the Guttones of Pliny. He fixes their original seat towards the mouths of the Vistula,† in which place they are last noticed by Tacitus. After that time, in the reign of M. Aurelius, he makes them remove to the lake Mæotis, and from thence to the Borysthenes and the Euxine, and the borders of the Getæ. Here at length they settled, and, according to their places of abode, obtained the subsequent

αποβῆναι μὴ δύνασθαι σπάνει πλοίων· ἐκεῖσε γὰρ καταφυγόντα τὸν τῶν Τριβαλλων βασιλέα Σύρμον, ἀντισχεῖν πρὸς τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν· εἰς δὲ τὸς Γέτας διαβάντα, ἑλεῖν τὴν αὐτων πόλιν, καὶ ἀνατρέψαι δια ταχέων εἰς τὴν οἰκείαν. Strab. lib. vii. p. 208.

* Scythas eos adpellans (Jornandes) quemadmodum et Isidorus in Chronico Gothorum. Cluv. Germ. Antiq. lib. iii. c. 34.

† The system of Jornandes brings them here too, but from Scandinavia. Hence they remove to the Euxine; and from the Borysthenes descend to the Danube.—However, their proper origin is still supposed in poetry to be the neighbourhood of Mæotis, which they first leave, under Odin, to repair to Scandinavia!

distinction of Ostrogoths and Westrogoths. It follows from this supposition, that the Goths were German; but the Getæ were never reckoned among the German nations. In the conduct of this argument, Cluverius professes to follow truth alone; but he evidently labours under a wish of claiming the conquest of the Western empire for his countrymen; and he congratulates them on the success of his discovery.* But whatever may have been the disputes concerning the history of these Barbarians, we will, for the present purpose, rest in the conclusion, that the Goths were the Getæ, and that the place from which they issued for the purpose of conquest or plunder, was that which has been already described.

Let us now attend to the transactions of the Getæ with the Romans.

Strabo dates the commencement of that good fortune which attended them in their enterprises against the empire, from the appointment of a man of much talent and activity to be their

* Quos (Gothos) verâ, Germanâque origine hactenùs per tot sæculorum spatium abalienatos, suis tandem restituisse sedibus, mihi gaudeo, communi verò patriæ gratulor. Germ. Antiq. lib. iii. c. 34.—Cluverius was born at Dantzick.

leader. This was Bœrebistes.* He gave to the nation a vigour and consistency unknown before. Under him therefore, having subdued several of the neighbouring tribes, they fearlessly passed the Ister, and laid waste Thrace to the borders of Macedonia and Illyricum; nor was it till after the death of this commander, and the division of the force of the country among several chieftains, that the Romans succeeded in repressing them. They were still numerous and formidable; but it was soon found, that their strength wanted direction; and Augustus seems to have greatly reduced, if not to have nearly subjugated them all.† But their warlike spirit, and particularly their secret connection with the German tribes‡ ever

* Βοιρεβίστας ἀνὴρ Γέτης, ἐπιστὰς ἐπὶ τὴν τῶ ἔθνους ἐπιστασίαν, ἀνελαβε κεκακωμένους τὸς ἀνθρώπους ὑπὸ συχνῶν πολέμων, καὶ τοσοῦτον ἐπήρεν (ἐν) ἀσκήσει καὶ νήψει, καὶ τῷ προσέχειν τοῖς πράγμασιν, ὥστ' ὀλίγων ἐτῶν μεγάλην ἀρχὴν κατεστήσατο, καὶ τῶν ὁμόρων τὸς πλείους ὑπέταξε τοῖς Γέταις· ἤδη δὲ καὶ Ῥωμαίοις φοβερὸς ἦν, διαβαίνων ἀδεῶς τὸν Ἴστρον, καὶ τὴν Θράκην λεηλατῶν μέχρι Μακεδονίας καὶ τῆς Ἰλλυρίδος. Lib. vii. p. 210.

† One word of Strabo marks the recent time of the expedition against them:—καὶ δὴ καὶ ΝΥΝ ἡνίκα ἔπεμψεν ἐπ' ἀυτὸς στρατείαν ὁ Σεβαστὸς Καίσαρ, &c. ib.

‡ Ὄυπω δ' εἰσὶν ὑποχείριοι τελέως, διὰ τὰς ἐκ τῶν Γερμανῶν ἐλπίδας, πολεμίων ὄντων τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις. Lib. vii. p. 211. This

hostile to the Roman name, preserved them from final submission; and in the time of Domitian they seem to have recovered their strength and importance. The war which they waged with him in Mœsia occasioned great and just terror at Rome. Dio* describes the affected pomp with which he endeavoured to conceal his disgraces; and Juvenal assists in the history of his defeat by the sarcastic mention of Fuscus, whose entrails were reserved for the repast of Dacian vultures.† However, they were again triumphantly repressed by Trajan and Caracalla. The former was perhaps the only commander who, at that time, had carried the Roman arms beyond the Ister,‡ and subdued

remark of Strabo on the hopes which the Getæ and Daci (for he joins them together) had from the Germans, throws light on the observation of Dio Cassius, that the Quadi and Marcomanni refused to give Domitian any assistance in his Dacian war; the very circumstance, we find, which led to his withdrawing from it.

* Lib. 67. 7. In compliance with the Roman custom, he calls these enemies of Domitian Dacians, though certain Greeks gave them the name of Getæ—*ὐκ ἀγνοῶν ὅτι Ἑλλήνων τινὲς Γέτας ἀυτὸς λέγουσιν, εἴτ' ὀρθῶς εἴτε μὴ λέγοντες.*—ib. 6.

† ——— vulturibus servabat viscera Dacis
Fuscus ——— Sat. 4.

‡ Primus, aut solus etiam, vires Romanas trans Istrum propagavit, domitis in provinciam Dacorum pileatis Sacisque nationibus, Decebalo rege.—Aur. Victor in Traj.

these Barbarians on their own ground. But this impression was soon removed; and the struggle recommenced with various success under the older and younger Gordian. In the time of Philip, they easily repassed the river, and possessed themselves of Mœsia; nor were his immediate successors able to make them return. At length, a composition was settled with them by Gallus and Volusian. This however was soon dissolved by the incapacity of Gallienus; and while the more western tribes of Barbarians were bursting through Gaul to Spain and Italy itself, the Goths spread without difficulty over Thrace and Macedonia. Yet signal victories were afterwards obtained over them by Claudius, who devoted himself, another Decius, and acquired the title of Gothicus;* by Aurelian, and finally by Constantine.

* Aur. Victor sufficiently conveys the formidable intimacy which the Goths had now acquired with the empire; quos diuturnitas nimis validos, ne prope incolas effecerat. In Claud. —How great a relief to the fe. s of Rome were the victories of Claudius, may be seen in this as well as other passages of Treb. Pollio.—Pugnatum in diversis regionibus, et ubique auspiciis Claudianis victi sunt Gotthi, prorsus ut jam tunc Constantio Cæsari nepoti futuro videretur Claudius securam parare Rempublicam. Apud Hist. Aug. in Div. Claud.

He revived what had been the peculiar glory of Trajan. He passed the Ister, and pursued the Barbarians into Sarmatia; and we may reasonably suppose, that this is one of the circumstances which have obtained for him so much applause from the Christian writers.* In their arguments with the Pagans, who maliciously insinuated that the establishment of Christianity was the decay of military glory, they successfully appeal to his great deeds in arms, and sometimes call him a second Trajan.

These were some of the principal actions of the Goths with the Romans, while they subsisted as a people, and could be said to have a country of their own. Not long after this, they were compelled to quit their settlements by a more strange and savage race which suddenly descended upon them from the wilds of Sarmatia and the borders of the Tanais. The causes which impelled the Huns forward from their remoter regions to the banks of the Ister, are not satisfactorily ascertained; but the terror of their name had preceded their arrival.† They

* Gothorum fortissimas et copiosissimas gentes in ipso barbarici soli sinu, hoc est, in Sarmatarum regione, delevit. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 28.

† Famâ latè serpente per Gothorum reliquas gentes, quòd

were represented as a raging whirlwind, issuing from a quarter wholly unknown, and sweeping away every thing which opposed their course. In order to escape from the tempest which threatened them, the chief part of the Gothic nation sought an asylum within the borders of the empire. An agreement was made; and Thrace and Mœsia, which they had so often plundered as enemies, were assigned to them as suppliants. They had voluntarily offered to Valens, as a condition of the grant, that they would live peaceably, and assist in the defence of the empire.* To this they added a proposal of embracing Christianity, and requested that bishops might be sent to instruct them in the doctrines, and train them in the duties of the Gospel.† But an accommodation, thus practicable and beneficial, was soon overthrown.

inusitatum antehac hominum genus modò ruens, ut turbo montibus celsis, ex abdito sinu coörtum opposita quæque convellit et corrumpit; populi pars major quæritabat domicilium remotum ab omni notitiâ barbarorum. Am. Marcell. lib. xxxi. c. 3.

* Missis oratoribus ad Valentem, suscipi se humili prece poscebant, et quietè victuros se pollicentes, et daturos, si res flagitâsset, auxilia. ib. c. 4.

† Gothi per legatos supplices poposcerunt, ut illis Episcopi, à quibus regulam Christianæ fidei discerent, mitterentur. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 33.

The Roman commissaries, appointed to assign the lands, and to establish the settlers in them, drove the barbarians to despair by their cruelties and exactions. A war ensued within the empire itself; and Valens, who marched in person against the Goths, was defeated, taken prisoner, and burnt alive; a calamity which, as Marcellinus reports, was pointed out by omens and presages, of a strange and alarming nature.* Inflamed with this success, they quickly spread over the neighbouring provinces; and, under the temptation of a common plunder, were joined by some of their late enemies, the Huns!—They were not effectually repressed, till the distresses of the state induced Gratian to associate with him in the government the great Theodosius, one of the most eminent of Christian sovereigns and commanders.

While he lived, the Goths were kept in perfect submission, and cheerfully fought for the common safety under the Roman ensigns. But at his death, the Eastern and Western empires descended to his sons Arcadius and Honorius.

* Intereà et Fortunæ volucris rota, adversa prosperis semper alternans, Bellonam furiis in societatem adscitis armabat, mœstósque transtulit eventus, quos adventare præsagiorum fides clarà monebat et portentorum. Lib. xxxi. c. 1.

On account of their tender age, they were unhappily left under the guardianship of Ruffinus and Stilicho. These men, very unequal in talents, were yet jealous of each other. The name and actions of the latter might have shielded him from reproach; yet both he and his rival were accused of nourishing ambitious hopes of sovereignty either for themselves or their families; and of secretly exciting the Goths to take up arms,* that they might the better promote their own interested views amid the public confusion. Encouraged by these and other hopes, two Barbarian chiefs successively penetrated into Italy, the famous Alaric and Rhadagaisus. The name of the latter is mentioned with equal terror and exultation by the Christian writers.† Orosius rates the number of his army, on a moderate calculation,‡ at two hundred thousand men, and Augustin is careful

* Cùm alius sibi, alius filio suo adfectans regale fastigium, ut rebus repentè turbatis, necessitas reipublicæ scelus ambitus tegeret, barbaros gentes ille immisit, hic fovit. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 37.

† Rhadagaisus omnium antiquorum præsentiúmque hostium longè immanissimus, repentino impetu totam inundavit Italiam. Oros. ib.

‡ Secundùm eos qui parcissimè referunt. ib. Zosimus doubles it.

to point out the ferociousness which distinguished it.* But this terror was speedily and unexpectedly dissipated. The unskilled Barbarian, having advanced into Etruria, and alarmed Rome for its own safety, chose an unfavourable position for his camp, among the hills of Fiesole.† It was surrounded, or harassed and deprived of supplies; and the mighty force which filled it, was rather consumed by famine, than destroyed by the sword. Alaric was not thus easily checked. His approach had been watched with anxiety, though the moment of his final success was not yet arrived.‡ Many battles were fought; and he did not retreat towards the Alps, till he had exercised the valour, and wasted the force of Rome.

These successes of the declining empire were sung by the Pagan and Christian poets, with

* Agmine ingenti et *immani*. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 23.

† In Fæsulanos montes cogit (Deus.) Oros. lib. vii. c. 37.

‡ Tentavit Geticus nuper delere tyrannus
Italiam, patrio veniens juratus ab Istro
Has arces æquare solo, tecta aurea flammis
Solvere, mastrucis proceres vestire togatos:
Jámque ruens Venetos turmis protriverat agros,
Et Ligurum vastârat opes, et amœna profundi
Rura Padi, Thuscúmque solum victo amne premebat.
Prudent. contr. Symm. lib. ii.

similar joy, but very different motives. Claudian extols the courage of Stilicho, which defeated the invaders, and his prudence which permitted the escape of his enemies, rather than expose the welfare of the state to the consequences of their desperation;* and he depends on the watchful care of Jupiter, which will always preserve the temple of Numa, one of the great parents of the Pagan rites, the antient seat of Quirinus, and the dread arcanum of Rome, perhaps its palladium, from the profanation even of barbarous eyes.†

On the other hand, it is the exultation of Prudentius, that so many victories were obtained under ensigns no longer profane. From the pious offering of their prayers at the altar

* This, if we may trust Orosius, is no other than a compliment to cover his treachery. Taceo (says Orosius) de Alarico rege cum Gothis suis sæpè victo, sæpè concluso, sempérque dimisso. Lib. vii. c. 37.

† ——————— procul arceat altus
Jupiter, ut delubra Numæ, sedémque Quirini
Barbaries oculis saltem temerare profanis
Possit, et arcanum tanti deprendere regni.
De Bell. Get. 100.

Symmachus has a similar persuasion, when he is pleading for the restoration of the altar of Victory—multa victoriæ debet æternitas vestra, et *adhuc plura debebit.*

of the true God, the commanders went to the encounter of the Barbarians; and those who revenged at Pollentia, the ravages which had desolated Pannonia during thirty years, were the soldiers not only of Rome but of Christ.* In the speech which he attributes to Rome, exulting in her recent triumphs, she compares Stilicho with those great commanders who had defended her against her antient enemies. If she confessed a just gratitude to the brave Camillus, who had rescued her from the long possession of the Gauls, what thanks were due to the conqueror of the Goths, an enemy defeated ere they had yet been able to view the walls of the city! "Mount, therefore, thy triumphal chariot;† bring hither thy spoils, and

* Hujus adoratis altaribus, et cruce fronti
Inscriptâ, cecinere tubæ: prima hasta Draconis
Præcurrit, quæ Christi apicem sublimior effert.
Illic terdenis gens exitiabilis annis
Pannoniæ pœnas tandem deleta pependit.
Cont. Sym. lib. ii.

The thirty years here alluded to, are mentioned more frequently and pointedly by Claudian. Both poets seem to date the ravage of Pannonia from that settlement within the Ister which was almost immediately followed by the defeat and death of Valens.

† Scande triumphalem currum; spoliisque receptis,
Huc, Christo comitante, veni.———Prud. ib.

the captives rescued from Barbaric hands; bring them in the power of Christ, whose favour has conferred them on the worshippers of his name."

But unavailing were the fond visions of permanent safety for Rome, thus lately triumphant. After a short interval, Alaric again made his appearance. Either dissatisfied with the new settlement which he had obtained by treaty, or harassed and deceived by the arts of Stilicho, he once more took up arms, and with better success. He penetrated into Italy, directed his march against Rome, and, after repeated attempts, took it by stratagem* in the year 1164, from the foundation of the city, and in the year 410 of the Christian æra. This is the great event, from which the present subject has arisen.† To this the Pagans confidently appealed, for the purpose of imputing the disasters of the state to the civil establishment of the Gospel, and of asserting the efficacy of the antient idolatry in the promotion of temporal welfare. The Western empire did indeed recover from this calamity for a while, and was

* Procop. de Bell. Vandal. lib. i. c. 2.

† See p. 54.

not extinguished till about sixty years after. But the Barbarians had now found their way to the capitol, nor did they cease till they had fully established themselves in it.

From the history thus presented to you it is necessary to draw a few inferences.

1. It is of particular importance to observe, that the foundation of the public evils of Rome was laid before the ministry of Christ began. To establish this point, was the object of the Christian advocates; for hence it results, that the Gospel is free from the charge brought against it by the Pagans: it was not the cause of the overthrow of the empire. The principles of sound government were previously lost; and with them, the proper support of sovereignty. Such is the punishment which, in the divine order of things, is commonly annexed to the violation of the rules of reason and virtue, in public as well as private life; and the numerous instances which have been adduced of the growing wickedness and weakness of Rome, and the gradual and alarming successes of the Barbarians against it, must convince us, that there is a natural connection between vice and misfortune, a strong and unavoidable tendency of public profligacy, to the loss of national power.

2. In the same events we may also observe a judicial punishment acting for a more peculiar purpose. After the church of Christ had risen within the empire, it suffered those long and dreadful persecutions which have been already related. In the diminution of the power of Rome, the Christian writers have, therefore, piously acknowledged the just visitation of Heaven. They have carefully compared the calamities of the empire, with the intolerance of the Pagan sovereigns; and they point out to us the marks of divine vengeance, in the temporal chastisements which followed each persecution of the faith, from the time of Nero to the conversion of Constantine; and the last of the ten plagues directed against the cruelties of Heathen Rome, was the public suppression of its beloved, but guilty, idolatry, the cause of all the evils which had been inflicted on the believers of the Gospel.*

3. Hence too we see the general subserviency of the temporal power of Rome to the wants of the church of Christ. The extent of the empire, and the authority which it exercised,

* Novissima pœna est omnium idolorum perditio, quæ primitùs facta in primis amabant. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 27.

were, without its intention, indeed, without its knowledge, the means of a wider and more effectual propagation of the Gospel; nor did its outward decline take place till the interests of the Faith were, in some measure, secured. Nay, in the events which befel it after the sovereigns became Christian, a similar purpose is still discoverable. It was the standing policy of the empire to convert to Christianity all the Barbarians who were received within the borders, or over whom the influence of civilization could be in any manner exerted;* and it is the grateful observation of Orosius, that the very decay of the civil power wrought the increase of the church of Christ.† There is yet another indication of the same Divine purpose. Eucherius, the son of Stilicho, for whom he designed

* Procopius makes the observation, and says of the Heruli, that they became milder men and better subjects in consequence of their conversion:—*τὴν δίαιταν ἐπὶ το ἡμερώτερον μεταβαλόντες, τοῖς Χριστιανῶν νόμοις ἐπὶ πλεῖστον προσχωρεῖν ἔγνωσαν, καὶ Ῥωμαίοις κατὰ τὸ ξυμμαχικὸν τὰ πολλὰ ἐπὶ τὰς πολεμίους ξυντάσσονται.* De Bell. Goth. lib. ii. c. 14.

† Si ob hoc solum Barbari Romanis finibus immissi forent, quòd vulgo per Orientem et Occidentem ecclesiæ Christi Hunnis et Suevis, Vandalis et Burgundionibus, diversísque et innumeris credentium populis replentur, laudanda et adtollenda Dei misericordia videretur. Hist. lib. vii. c. 41.

the empire of the West, was secretly connected with the Pagan party within the walls of Rome. We are distinctly informed, that, from his early years, he had seen with dislike the public change of the faith of the empire, and meditated the ruin of the Christians;* and a revengeful pledge was said to have been given to the enemies of the Gospel, that his attainment of the imperial power should be the restoration of the temples of the gods, and the overthrow of the Christian churches.† This wickedness was frustrated by his own death, and that of his father. Nor was Paganism promoted by the success of the Barbarians themselves. Rhadagaisus was an idolater;‡ and in his march towards the city, offered daily sacrifices to the gods, his protectors.§ When Rome fell, it submitted to an enemy, who, though imperfectly instructed in the faith, was the least hostile to it.

* Jam indè Christianorum persecutionem à puero privatóque meditantem. Oros. lib. vii. c. 38.

† Occisus est et Eucherius, qui ad conciliandum sibi favorem Paganorum, restitutione templorum et eversione ecclesiarum imbuturum se regni primordia minabatur. Oros. ib.

‡ Paganus et Scytha erat. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 37.

§ Quotidianis sacrificiis placabat atque invitabat Deos. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 23.

Alaric was himself a professor of Christianity,* and the protector of it in others. The civil polity had performed its temporary office, and was dissolved. The religion of Christ is eternal, and amidst the destruction of all other authority, the Gospel was yet respected and maintained.

* Duo tunc Gothorum populi cum duobus potentissimis regibus suis; quorum unus Christianus, propiórque Romano; alius Paganus, Barbarus, et verè Scytha. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 37.

CHAPTER IV.

DISASTROUS ORIGIN OF THE ROMANS...THEIR GODS TWICE VANQUISHED AT TROY...IMPOTENT GUARDIANS OF ITALY ...FATE NOT MORE SERVICEABLE TO THE ROMANS THAN THEIR GODS...BETTER FAITH OF CHRISTIANS...INFERENCE THAT PAGANISM DOES NOT CONFER TEMPORAL GOOD... CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST PART.

THE argument that the Deities of Pagan Rome were the bestowers of temporal happiness, and that the calamities which befel the empire in its later age, were occasioned by the civil establishment of Christianity, has been refuted by an appeal to history. The veil which covered from the eyes of the people the earlier disasters of the state, was removed by the advocates of the Gospel. From their diligence and zeal, therefore, came the description of the vices and growing miseries of Rome, while yet idolatrous; while, as Augustin remarks, her superstitions were in their fullest maintenance; while her priesthood was publicly honoured, and the mingled odours of garlands and Sabean frankincense ascended from the altars of her gods.*

* Quando illa mala fiebant, calebant aræ numinum Sabæo

This perhaps might be deemed sufficient for the vindication of the Gospel. But, not content with this, the Christian writers laboured to expose the general inefficacy of the Heathen worship. They ascended to the origin of the Roman deities, and proved them to have been equally helpless in Asia and in Italy: they described the miseries which ambition had inflicted on the world amid the acknowledgement of so corrupt a mythology, and concluded, that the dominion of Rome had been derived from other causes, and conferred for other purposes. Of this part of the literary warfare with idolatry, some specimens shall therefore be given.

The criticism of our own days may indeed deem such contention unimportant, and the statement of it superfluous. But our researches into the transactions of other ages must be regulated by the circumstances of the times to which they belong. We do not want to be convinced of the folly of polytheism. But, in a contest between two great parties of Christians and Pagans, the question was justly regarded as of great moment. To suppress it, therefore,

thure sertísque recentibus halabant: clarebant sacerdotia, fana renidebant; sacrificabatur, ludebatur, furebatur in templis. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 31.

would be to mutilate historic truth, and to cast away one great feature from the portrait of the age which we delineate.

Nothing was more flattering to the Romans, than the mention of their Trojan origin. Accordingly, it is every where insisted upon in their histories. Livy* describes the progress of Æneas and Antenor from the captured city—their arrival in different parts of Italy, with no other means of empire than their arms and vessels; and the fond revival of the name of Troy in a double settlement.

Nor was this descent from a vanquished race unacknowledged by the greatest or the most fortunate of the Romans. It was the pride of Julius Cæsar to deduce his name from Iulus.† And so powerful was the remembrance of the origin of his family in the mind of Augustus, that he is supposed by some critics to have entertained the design of transferring his new sovereignty to its antient cradle, and of reviving the Trojan empire by the force of Roman hands.

* Lib. i. c. 1.

† Οἱ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι τόν τ' Αἰνείαν ἀρχηγέτην ἡγοῦνται· ἔπειτά τε Ἴόλιος ἀπὸ Ἴόλου τινὸς τῶν προγόνων. ἐκεῖνος δ' ἀπὸ Ἴόλου τὴν προσωνυμίαν ἔσχε τάυτην, τῶν ἀπογόνων ἷς ὢν τῶν ἀπὸ Αἰνείου. Strab. lib. 13. p. 409.

With a view to this rumoured intention, it has been conjectured, that Horace wrote the third ode of his third book. Juno, the original enemy of Troy, is employed to declare the renewal of her vengeance, if the hated city shall be rebuilt. She will allow the posterity of the exiles to attain greatness and glory in a distant country, and to extend their dominion at pleasure to the frozen or the burning zone. But the herds of the field must continue to graze where Paris lies; and the tomb of Priam must still be the haunt of the wild beasts. Should a mistaken piety seek to restore the fated town; though Apollo should thrice rear the brazen wall, thrice should it be overthrown by her victorious Greeks; and thrice should the captive matron bewail her slaughtered husband and extinguished family.* It appears then, that some of the deities which afterwards obtained the chief honours of Pagan Rome, and were now supposed to contribute to its possession of the empire of the world, had been the principal instruments of the destruction of its parent city! Nor was their

* Ter si resurgat murus aheneus,
Auctore Phœbo, ter pereat meis
Excisus Argivis; ter uxor
Capta, virum puerósque ploret.—

anger transient or local. They pursue the fugitives, and are irreconcilable in their hatred to the race itself of Troy. Augustin informs us, that, in his age, Virgil was commonly taught to the Roman children.* And what, he asks, did they learn from this model of taste and mythology, concerning their ancestors? The rooted enmity of Juno to the boasted parent of Rome, and her extended plan of destruction against him and his followers.

> Gens inimica mihi Tyrrhenum navigat æquor,
> Ilium in Italiam portans, victósque Penates.

On the other hand, Cybele was the friend of Troy, which she could not protect against the Greeks. Yet she too was honoured at Rome, as one of its chief defenders. Tertullian had witnessed this fervour of devotion towards her, and expressed his contempt of it.† These

* Quem propterea parvuli legunt, ut poeta magnus, omniúmque præclarissimus atque optimus, teneris ebibitus annis, non facile oblivione possit aboleri. Civ. Dei, lib. i. 3. For the particulars which follow in the text, consult this chapter of Augustin, and the 25th chap. of Tertullian's apology.

† Apol. c. 25. He mentions a notion which probably was entertained by some zealous devotee of Cybele, that she allowed the fall of Troy, knowing the vengeance that would be taken for it in the future subjugation of Greece! In return, he tells a story not very creditable to the prescience of the goddess,

guardian deities, therefore, were imported into Italy, some of them hostile to the welfare of the race of Rome, and others already vanquished. Æneas himself declares the mortifying truth, and describes the priest of Apollo escaping in distraction from a temple no longer to be defended, and carrying in his hands the helpless and fugitive deities.

> Pantheus Othryades arcis Phœbíque sacerdos,
> Sacra manu, victósque Deos, parvúmque nepotem
> Ipse trahit, cursúque amens ad littora tendit.

And, that no doubt may remain of the impotence of these protectors of empire, the shade of Hector makes its appearance, and solemnly recommends them to the superior care of Æneas.

> Sacra, suósque sibi commendat Troja Penates.

Nay, those deities who succeeded in their warfare against Troy were condemned to witness, in their turn, the overthrow of their own favourite cities. Juno, so powerful in Phrygia,

whose priest shed some of his own blood on the altar at Sirmium for the life of M. Aurelius, who had now been seven days dead! He desires her to obtain better intelligence hereafter, lest she and her agents should fall into disgrace. O nuncios tardos, quorum vitio excessum imperatoris non ante Cybele cognovit. Næ talem Deum riderent Christiani.

was utterly helpless at Carthage.* She loved it, even to the neglect of Samos. She meditated perpetual empire for it; but the fates interposed with superior force, and destroyed her fondest hopes.

——— hîc illius arma,
Hîc currus fuit, hîc regnum Dea gentibus esse,
Si quà fata sinant, jam tum tendítque fovétque.

Indeed, the greatest of the gods was equally impotent. Jupiter himself could not preserve his own Crete, though it contained his own tomb, from the Roman arms; and Tertullian† well observes that he too was indebted to the fates for any power which he might have.

——————— fato stat Juppiter ipse.—

Are these then the gods, through whose interference Rome was to have been preserved from

* Juno et deorum quisquis amicior
Afris, inulta cesserat impotens
Tellure.———Hor. Carm. lib. ii. od. 1.

† Apol. c. 25. He reverts with much force and spirit to this subject in the 29th chapter which refutes the charge, that the Christians showed a disaffection to the emperor in their contempt of the gods. He claims a just precedence for the emperor. The gods belong to him: they were fabricated from his mines, and, together with their temples, are at his disposal. The gods therefore do not protect Cæsar. He is a protector to them;—yet not always: for Cæsar is sometimes displeased, and many of them have felt the effects of his ill humour. Multi Dii

the fury of Alaric? Is it to their ineffectual displeasure that the fall of the city is to be ascribed? And is it for the sake of regaining the assistance of such miserable defenders of empire, that Christianity is to be rejected, and the Pagan worship restored? That they continued during so many ages in possession of their temples and altars, is due to the worshippers alone. The gods never preserved Rome. Rome has maintained them in their places by its valour and its superstition.

Such was the unhappy fate of the Trojan gods before their banishment to Italy. But the ill-protected Troy was again overthrown after its connection with the Roman fortunes, and amid the guardianship of their common deities. The perjury of Laömedon,* and the injuries offered to Menelaüs were urged as sufficient causes of the former abandonment of the city by the gods, the lovers of justice. But what were the crimes to be revenged, when it fell once more under the fury of the conqueror?

habuerunt Cæsarem iratum. Ita qui sunt in Cæsaris potestate, cujus et toti sunt, quomodo habebunt salutem Cæsaris in potestate? Compare pp. 57, 58.

* Priamo, inquiunt, sunt reddita Laomedontea paterna perjuria. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 2.

The inhabitants of Ilium, in Strabo's time, were disposed to maintain, with some show of vanity, that their town stood upon the site of the ancient Troy.* But he places the second Ilium at the distance of about thirty stadia from the first.† It was an humble village; and its only boast was a temple of Minerva, small and of plain construction. But the curiosity of Alexander having drawn him thither after the battle of Granicus, he made devotional offerings to the goddess, repaired and somewhat enlarged the place, and honoured it with the name of a city. He promised further favours, which he did not live to bestow, but which were remembered by some of his successors in that branch of the Macedonian empire.—When the Romans made their first appearance in Asia, in the war against Antiochus the Great, they found it a town of a moderate size, but fallen into such poverty, that, according to the testi-

*Οἱ δὲ νῦν Ἰλιεῖς φιλοδοξοῦντες καὶ θέλοντες εἶναι ταύτην τὴν παλαιὰν (πόλιν) παρεσχήκασι λόγον τοῖς ἐκ τῆς Ὁμήρου ποιήσεως τεκμαιρομένοις· οὐ γὰρ ἔοικεν ἄυτη εἶναι, ἡ καθ' Ὅμηρον. Strab. lib. xiii. p. 408.

† ὁ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα ἵδρυσε (Ἴλος) τὴν πόλιν ὅπου νῦν ἐστιν· ἀλλὰ σχεδόν τι τριάκοντα σταδίοις ἀνωτέρω πρὸς ἕω καὶ πρὸς τὴν Ἴδην, καὶ τὴν Δαρδανίαν, κατὰ τὴν νῦν καλουμένην Ἰλιέων κώμην. ib.

mony of an eye-witness, the houses had not even the luxury of tile coverings. Through the kindness of Rome, however, it soon received much enlargement and beauty. And in this improved and happy condition it was found by Fimbria in the Mithridatic war. The writers who attempt to describe the character of this ferocious partisan of Cinna, seem almost at a loss for words to express it.* He went out as lieutenant or friend, with V. Flaccus the consul, whom, at length, he murdered, with no ordinary marks of cruelty:† and it was with the army, of which he had obtained the command by this act of treachery and blood, that he assaulted Ilium which had reserved itself for Sylla, and refused to admit Fimbria within its walls.

The innocent city was now treated with far

* In the Epitome of Livy, lib. lxxxii. he is called a man ultimæ audaciæ. And by Augustin he is branded with the just distinction of viro spurcissimo Romanorum. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 7.

† Appian thus mentions the event:—*ὁ δὲ Φιμβριάς ἀυτὸν ἐπελθὼν ἔκτεινεν, ὕπατον τε ὄντα Ῥωμαίων, καὶ ςρατηγὸν τῆδε τῆ πολέμῃ, ἰδιώτης ἀυτὸς ὤν, καὶ ὡς φίλῳ κελεύοντι συνεληλυθώς· ἐκτεμὼν δὲ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀυτῆ, μεθῆκεν ἐς θάλασσαν, καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ἄταφον ἐκρίψας, αὐτὸν ἀυτοκράτορα ἀπέφηνε τῆ ςρατῆ.* De Bell. Mithrid.

more cruelty than by the Greeks of old.* We are distinctly informed, that before he entered the place, Fimbria proclaimed his inhuman resolution that nothing should be spared:† and the manner in which he proceeded to execute his vengeance is circumstantially related by Appian. He slew all whom he met, and burnt the city itself. On those who were concerned in sending the offer of its services to Sylla, he inflicted various torments. Not even the altars of the gods were spared; and those who had fled for refuge to the temple of Minerva, perished in the fire which consumed the temple itself. The very walls were overthrown, and on the day following the execution, Fimbria made a circuit round the ruins, in order to obtain with his own eyes the dreadful satisfaction that nothing was left standing.‡

* Quid miserum commiserat Ilium, ut à Fimbriâ Marianarum partium homine pessimo everteretur, multò ferociùs atque crudeliùs quàm olim à Græcis? Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 7. The same is the observation of Appian:—ἡ μὲν δὴ, χέιρονα τῶν ἐπὶ Ἀγαμέμνονι παθοῦσα ὑπὸ συγγενοῦς, διολώλει· καὶ οἰκόπεδον οὐδὲν ἀντῆς, οὐδ' ἱερὸν, οὐδ' ἄγαλμα ἔτι ἦν. De Bell. Mithrid.

† Fimbria prius edictum proposuit nè cui parceretur; atque urbem totam, cunctósque in eâ homines incendio concremavit. Aug. ib.

‡ Appian supposes indeed that Fimbria took a treacherous

It had been zealously contended by the Pagans in excuse of the gods, who had protected the first Troy, that the town was not destroyed till they had quitted their stations in it.

> Excessere omnes, adytis arisque relictis,
> Dî, quibus imperium hoc steterat ————

But the second Ilium fell while all its deities remained within the walls. The antient city was lost because the Palladium was removed: but Augustin informs us, on the authority of Livy, whose words time has not spared to us, that the image of Minerva alone kept its place, while every other was overthrown; and that it was afterwards found erect and entire, under the ruins of her own temple!*

vengeance, after he had requested admission as a relation:— *ἐσελθὼν δὲ τὸς ἐν ποσὶ πάντας ἔκτεινε, καὶ πάντα ἐνεπίμπρη, καὶ τὸς πρεσβεύσαντας ἐς τὸν Σύλλαν ἐλυμαίνετο ποικίλως, ὅτε τῶν ἱερῶν φειδόμενος, ὅτε τῶν ἐς τὸν νεὼν τῆς Αθηνᾶς καταφυγόντων, ὅς ἀυτῷ τῷ νεῶ κατέπρησε· κατέσκαπτε δὲ καὶ τὰ τέιχη, καὶ τῆς ἐπιώσης ἠρεύνα περιϊὼν, μὴ τὶ συνεστηκε τῆς πόλεως ἔτι.* De Bell. Mithrid.

* Eversis quippe et incensis omnibus cum oppido simulachris, solùm Minervæ simulachrum, sub tantâ ruinâ templi illius, ut scribit Livius, integrum stetisse perhibetur. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 7. Appian cannot refrain from hinting, that this might have been the Palladium deposited there by Diomede and Ulysses!—Perhaps the posture in which it was found, may

Such, retorted the Christian writers, are the fortunes of the twice vanquished Troy. It equally suffers, whether its gods be present or absent; from the enmity of the Greeks, and the alliance of the Romans its friends, its protectors and kindred.* It was therefore altogether unadvisable to trust the guardianship of Rome to deities which had so shamefully failed at the first Troy. Nor indeed did they succeed better in protecting the establishments committed to their care, after their arrival in Italy. Augustin reminds us, that Lavinium, which had kindly received them fugitive and forlorn, was soon abandoned for Alba; and that Alba, the nearer parent of Rome, was deserted and destroyed for the sake of Rome itself.† Nor was

serve to determine the dispute about its antiquity. Homer's Minerva was sitting. This is remarked by Strabo, who adds, that such was her *antient* attitude in several places: Πολλὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαίων τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ξοάνων καθήμενα δέικνυται, καθάπερ ἐν Φωκάιᾳ, Μεσσαλίᾳ, Ῥώμῃ, Χίῳ, καὶ ἄλλαις πλείοσιν, &c. lib. xiii. p. 413.

* Ἐκέλευσε δὲ καὶ ἀυτὸν, ὄντα Ῥωμάιον, ἔισω δέχεσθαι· καταμνησάμενος τι καὶ τῆς συγγενείας τῆς ὥσης ἐς Ῥωμάιους Τυρόιν. App. de Bell. Mithrid.

† Alba subversa est, ubi post Ilium, quod Græci everterunt, et post Lavinium, ubi rex Latinus eum regem, peregrinum atque fugitivum, constituerat, tertio loco habitaverunt numina illa Trojana. Civ. Dei, lib. iii. c. 14.

Rome more secure, through their assistance, than the places from which the gods were already driven. The victorious Gauls repeatedly exhibited before the descendants of the Trojans that picture of desolation which had been presented to the eyes of their ancestors by the vengeance of the Greeks; and Livy confesses that the guardian powers of Rome which could not be removed from the fury of Brennus, were buried in the earth by their worshippers,* and that the temples and houses were plundered and burnt by the conqueror.

From the inauspicious descent therefore of the Roman gods, and the repeated failure of protection to their votaries, it was safely concluded, that the evils which befel the city through the hostility of Alaric, were not occasioned by the establishment of Christianity, and the consequent displeasure of the neglected idols. Long before the appearance of Christ upon earth, they were equally unable to defend their worshippers, at Troy, the parent and the daughter of Rome, and at Rome itself.

With this argument was connected another which proved the superior sufferings of the

* Optimum ducunt, condita in doliolis defodere. Lib. v. c. 40.

Pagans in a state of war. We have heard their complaint, that the favour of Bellona was recently withdrawn from them, and that the hostilities in which the empire now engaged, were more destructive than before. This was well refuted by contrasting the influence of idolatry and the Gospel under the same circumstances, and by appealing to the merciful conduct of Alaric.

Sallust has somewhere said, that the Romans were a people naturally just.* Indeed, nothing is more extolled by their writers than their love of equity, their mildness and forbearance, and their disposition to pardon injuries rather than revenge them by unnecessary war. And from this spirit of flattery came the celebrated compliment of Virgil which was so long remembered, and so fondly quoted at Rome as the proper characteristic of its temper and genius. To excel in arts, in oratory, or science, might be allowed to the Greek; the proper business of the Roman was imperial; to extend his government over the world, and to prescribe the laws of peace; to quell resistance, but never to withhold mercy from the suppliant; to cherish

* Jus bonúmque apud eos non legibus magis quàm naturâ valebat. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. ii. c. 18.

the submissive, and to chastise only those who presumed to rise up against his rightful and universal dominion.* But what was the military practice of a people thus naturally just, thus prone to forgiveness? The same Sallust too well informs us in the description which Cæsar gives of the cruelties of Catiline and the conspirators:—"Murder, conflagration, children torn from the embraces of their parents; the parents themselves slain, or made the victims of the conqueror's will; houses and temples plundered, arms and dead bodies lying in promiscuous heaps, every place disfigured with blood and resounding with lamentation!"† Are these only the sanguinary excesses of civil rage? Look then to the usual effects of their unrelenting hostilities against every nation.

It is a dreadful fact in the history of the Romans, that, when the town of an enemy was

* Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
(Hæ tibi erunt artes,) pacísque imponere morem;
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

† Rapi virgines, pueros; divelli liberos à parentum amplexu, matres-familiarum pati quæ victoribus collibuisset, fana atque domos spoliari, cædem et incendia fieri; postremò armis cadaveribus, cruore, atque luctu omnia compleri. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 5.

taken, no protection was publicly allowed. In the wars which their desolating ambition waged during so many ages of Paganism, it was no part of their system to show mercy to man or piety to the gods, by abstaining from blood in places the most sacred. They sternly pursued their destructive object, and sacrificed their helpless victims in the temples and at the very altars.* Augustin boldly refers his opponents to the conduct of those commanders whose clemency and piety had been most extolled. Marcellus is represented by the Roman writers at the siege of Syracuse with all the amiableness which national flattery could bestow on him; and they carefully mention the tears which he shed at the thoughts of the misery which the city was about to suffer at his hands. But Marcellus, deceitfully humane, proclaimed no asylum for the wretched inhabitants. The custom of Roman war took its fatal course; and we read of no mercy experienced by the vanquished, of no shrine that was spared! The piety of Fabius at Tarentum was equal to this

* Quando tot tantásque urbes, ut latè dominarentur, expugnatas captásque everterunt, legatur nobis, quæ templa excipere solebant, ut ad ea quisquis confugisset, liberaretur? Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 6.

boasted humanity. He sacked the town, and made a promiscuous slaughter of the citizens. He rifled the temples, and took prisoners the gods themselves.* But these lessons of atrocity had been taught long since to their ancestors at Troy. The Greeks had ravaged the temples of all the gods. The shrine of Juno herself was made the depository of the images and holy vessels collected from her kindred deities; and instead of restraining an impious plunder, she was compelled to preserve it.† Indeed, some of the most affecting poetry of Virgil is employed in describing the slaughter of the aged and feeble Priam at the very altar of Jupiter Hercæus.

* The gods which he did not carry away, he left with a sneer:—Cùm ei scriba suggessisset, quid de signis Deorum, quæ multa capta fuerunt, fieri juberet, continentiam suam etiam jocando condivit. Quæsivit enim, cujusmodi essent; et cùm ei non solùm multa grandia, verùm etiam renunciarentur armata; Relinquamus, inquit, Tarentinis Deos iratos. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 6. For the boasted mercy of Æmilius Paullus,—the seventy towns in Epirus given up to plunder, and 150,000 of the inhabitants sold for slaves, see Livy, lib. xlv. § 34.

† Custodes lecti Phœnix et dirus Ulysses
Prædam asservabant: huc undique Troïa gaza
Incensis erepta adytis, mensæque Deorum,
Craterésque auro solidi, captiváque vestis
Congeritur.——— Æn. ii.

From this disgusting picture of ambition urging its way through every obstacle, let us turn to the better practice of the Barbarians. Even the imperfect notions of Christianity which had been entertained by Alaric, produced consequences more merciful than were ever furnished by the boasted, but sophistical humanity of Pagan Rome. The trembling city expected nothing but destruction at his hands; but when his army was on the point of entering it, two proclamations were issued,* that unnecessary slaughter should be avoided; and that inviolable protection should be granted to all who took refuge in the churches, and particularly in those which were dedicated to the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. We know, that this was religiously observed. The holy places were filled with a mixed multitude of fugitives who sought the promised safety, and who found it there. Within that sanctuary, the arm of violence was not lifted against the

* Adest Alaricus, trepidam Romam obsidet, turbat, irrumpit. Dato tamen præcepto priùs, ut si qui in sancta loca, præcipuèque in sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli basilicas confugissent, hos in primis inviolatos securósque esse sinerent. Tum deindè, in quantum possent, prædæ inhiantes, à sanguine temperarent. Oros. Hist. lib. vii. c. 39.

suppliant; from those altars no captive was dragged to death or slavery; nay, we read, that the pitying enemy, of his own accord, placed within the Christian asyla,* those Pagans whom he might have slain, and who, by the practice of Roman warfare, would have been considered just objects of vengeance within the temples of their own false deities. Shall the infidelity of our own days, an infidelity worse than Pagan, insinuate a malicious doubt of the mercy of Alaric? It might be amply illustrated from the records of the military transactions of those barbarians, who, in a subsequent age, contended for the possession of Italy against the arms of the Eastern empire. If the zeal of Augustin or Orosius be represented as receiving, with too much readiness, a testimony flattering to the cause of Christianity, who shall attribute such a bias to the mind of Procopius? Yet, whoever peruses his account of the Gothic war, will meet with more instances of genuine mercy, continence, and generosity, on the part of the barbarians alone,

* Ibi accipiebat limitem trucidatoris furor: illuc ducebantur à miserantibus hostibus, quibus etiam extra ipsa loca pepercerant, nè in eos incurrerent, qui similem misericordiam non habebant. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 1.

than can be furnished by the entire military history of Pagan Rome.*

It appears then, that the sufferings of the city from the hands of Alaric, could not, at the utmost, be greater than the custom of Roman

* In another siege of Rome, the Goths would not injure the church of St Paul, which stood without the walls, and was connected with it by a long colonnade, though their own operations were impeded by it: but divine service was administered there as usual. The same reverence was shown to the church of St. Peter. Ἔστι δὲ τις καὶ ἀιδῶς πρὸς τᾶντα δὴ τὰ ἱερὰ τοῖς Γότθοις· ἐς ὀδέτερον γῶν τοῖν ἀπόστολοιν νεῶν, παρὰ πάντα τὸν τῶ πολέμω καιρὸν, ἄχαρὶ τι πρὸς ἀντῶν γέγονεν. De Bell. Goth. lib. ii. c. 4. When Totilas afterwards went to the siege of the city, he treated the inhabitants of the country with great mildness, and when he had taken Rome, having gone to pray in the church of St. Peter, he issued orders to stop all further effusion of blood. ib. lib. iii. c. 13—20. The conduct of the same barbarian at the capture of Naples had been singularly humane. The inhabitants having been nearly famished during the siege, he himself prescribed, that a moderate quantity of food should at first be given to each of them. He accustomed them gradually to the use of sustenance so long withheld, and prevented the mischiefs which would have resulted from a sudden and voracious indulgence. When he had saved their lives, he set them at liberty, not excepting even the garrison. Procopius is so struck with this extraordinary humanity, that he seems to doubt the credibility of it in an enemy and a barbarian:—φιλανθρωπίαν ἐς τὸς ἡλωκότας ἐπεδείξατο, ὅτε πολεμίῳ, ὅτε βαρβάρῳ ἀνδρὶ πρέπωσιν. lib. iii. c. 8.

war allowed; but that the new features of humanity were the immediate and happy effects of the religion of Christ.* Yet, says Augustin, the Pagans persist in attributing their misfortunes to the civil establishment of the Gospel! In the moment of danger, they abjured their useless gods; and in order to conciliate the barbarian soldier, tremblingly pronounced the name of Christ. The danger being removed, they now return to their heathen impiety, and again blaspheme that sacred Name to which they owe their unmerited safety. The common evils which have attended the capture of the city they perversely impute to our holy religion: the benefits which they have unexpectedly experienced, they arrogantly ascribe to their own FATE!†

* Quicquid igitur vastationis, trucidationis, deprædationis—in istâ recentissimâ Romanâ clade commissum est, fecit hoc consuetudo bellorum. Quod autem more novo factum est, ut amplissimæ basilicæ implendæ populo cui parceretur, eligerentur et decernerentur, ubi nemo feriretur, unde nemo raperetur, quo liberandi multi à miserantibus hostibus ducerentur, unde captivandi nulli nec à crudelibus hostibus abducerentur; hoc Christi nomini, hoc Christiano tempori tribuendum, quisquis non videt, cæcus; quisquis videt, nec laudat, ingratus; quisquis laudanti reluctatur, insanus est. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 7.

† Sic evaserunt multi, qui nunc Christianis temporibus de-

Had then the fate of the Romans that influence in their preservation which the gods did not possess?

Augustin gives us a view of the notions which were entertained in his time concerning the influence of fate, and that consequent knowledge of events which might be obtained from the practice of astrology. It was strenuously maintained by some, that the stars had a certain virtue of their own,* and that they portended what they pleased through their position,—a position exclusive of the will of the gods, or at least superior to it. This had been noticed by Cicero as a doctrine which had many followers in his age; and a decisive influence over the birth and fortunes of individuals was superstitiously attributed to the zodiac.† It is evident, that the tendency of such an opinion was to destroy the belief, or the worship, of the

trahunt; et mala, quæ illa civitas pertulit, Christo imputant; bona verò quæ in eos ut viverent, propter Christi honorem facta sunt, non imputant CHRISTO nostro, sed *fato suo*. ib. lib. 1. c. 1.

* Aliqui—intelligunt vim positionis siderum, qualis est quando quis nascitur, sive concipitur, quod aliqui alienant à Dei voluntate. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 1.

† Vim quandam esse aiunt signifero in orbe, qui Græco ζωδιακὸς dicitur. De Divinat. lib. ii. c. 42.

gods altogether:* for all rational supplication is directed to an object of supposed power; but if the gods had only a subordinate and permitted direction of events, their altars must soon be deserted for those of their superiors. This inconvenient consequence was perceived by another class of persons, who therefore attempted to preserve the credit of the stars and the gods together. Their argument was, that although human events were immediately indicated by the position and aspect of the stars, yet the real directors of these appearances were the gods from their remoter situations.† They impressed certain impulses on the face of the heavens; and these were communicated to mortals through the observation of the stars. In this sense therefore, the stars were only a convenient medium of the will of the gods, the instruments of their sovereign pleasure. But here again it is evident, that, if all human ac-

* This was also the conclusion of Eusebius, or rather of Origen, from whom he quotes:—*εἰ γὰρ κατηνάγκαται τάδε τινὰ γενέσθαι, καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ποιῶσιν, οὐδὲν δὲ παρὰ τὴν τούτων πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐπιπλοκὴν δύναται γενέσθαι, θεὸν ἀλογίστως ἀξιοῦμεν τάδε τινὰ ἡμῖν δωρήσασθαι.* Præp. Evang. lib. vi. c. 11.

† Dicuntur stellæ significare potiùs ista quàm facere. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 1.

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tions are determined by t
the gods are chargeable w
calamities of mankind; a
Plato shrunk with so mu
posely committed the forma
the lesser gods, lest his Demiurge should sum
a just reproach from the moral irregularities which might follow.* But indeed the whole language of Roman astrology was equally adverse to this interpretation; and the terms of the Mathematici, as they were called, asserted in the strongest manner, that events were fortunate or otherwise, and actions were good or evil, by the positive determination of the stars.† Upon this, as well as every other branch of divination practised at Rome, Cicero poured all the force of his ridicule. And indeed, the absurdity inherent in the art itself, was often found to be highly embarrassing to the professors. One of these perplexities we see in the account of Nigidius, a man deemed of sufficient genius and learning to be named

* ἵνα τῆς ἔπειτα εἴη κακίας ἑκάστῳ ἀναίτιος. Plutarch. De Plato, c. 9.

† Non quidem ita solent loqui Mathematici, ut dicant, Mars ita positus homicidam significat, sed homicidam facit. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 1.

gether with Varro.* He was driven to a strange method of maintaining the credit of his opinions. In order to explain the different fates of twin brothers, he exhibited the notable experiment of the wheel, from which he obtained the name of Figulus. As the wheel turned rapidly round, he marked it with ink, at two quick strokes. When the wheel stopped, the marks were found at almost the opposite parts of the circle. "Thus it is," said he, "with the rotation of the circle of the heavens. This also is so rapid, that children born, as it were, at the same moment, have very different parts of the heavens presented to them; and thus is their dissimilarity explained!"†

* A. Gellius, lib. xix. c. 14. Lucan speaks of him, as might be expected, with much reverence.—

At Figulus, cui cura Deos, secretâque cœli
Nôsse fuit, quem non stellarum Ægyptia Memphis
Æquaret visu, numerisque moventibus astra.
Aut hic errat (ait) nullâ cum lege per ævum
Mundus, et incerto discurrunt sidera motu;
Aut, si fata movent, orbi, generique paratur
Humano matura lues——— Lib. i. v. 639.

† Sic, inquit, in tantâ cœli rapacitate, etiam si alter post alterum, tantâ celeritate nascatur, quantâ rotam bis ipse percussi, in cœli spatio plurimum est. Hinc sunt, inquit, quæcunque dissimillima perhibentur in moribus, casibúsque geminorum. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 3.

The same uncertainty and contradiction is found in all the systems of the Pagans concerning fate, providence, and the events of human life. Some appeared to exclude a providence by the establishment of fate; and others, giving the supreme rank to providence, made fate consequential to it, and dependent upon it. This, the more lofty of the opinions of antiquity, was taught by Plato. According to the view taken of this part of his philosophy by Plutarch, he establishes a triple providence. The first* consists in an union of the intelligence and beneficence of the prime Deity, and the application of these qualities to the beauty, order, and perfection of every thing divine. The next resides in the secondary gods. These make their progress through the heavens indeed; but their office is to preserve the order assigned to mortal affairs, and to provide for the safety and continuance of things in their kinds. The last providence is that which is exerted by the De-

* Ἔστιν οὖν πρόνοια, ἡ μὲν Ἀνωτάτω καὶ Πρώτη, τῷ πρώτῳ Θεῷ νόησις, εἴτε καὶ βόλησις ὅσα, ἐνεργέτις ἁπάντων, καθ' ἣν πρώτως ἕκαστα τῶν θείων διαπαντὸς ἄριστά τε καὶ κάλλιστα κεκόσμηται. Ἡ δὲ Δευτέρα, δευτέρων θεῶν τῶν κατ' οὐρανὸν ἰόντων, καθ' ἣν τά τε θνητὰ γίνεται τεταγμένως, καὶ ὅσα πρὸς διαμονὴν καὶ σωτηρίαν ἑκάστων τῶν γενῶν. Τρίτη δ' ἄν εἰκότι ῥηθείη πρόνοιά τε καὶ προμήθεια τῶν ὅσοι περὶ γῆν δαίμονες τεταγμένοι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πράξεων φύλακές τε καὶ ἐπίσκοποί εἰσιν. De Fato, c. 9.

mons. To these is committed the inspection of the actions of individuals; and, for the more convenient discharge of this office, they are placed near to the earth, and around it. Fate therefore is here subjected to the primary providence, or the result of it. And this conclusion is drawn from the doctrine expressed by Timæus concerning the formation of the world. For, when the Demiurge had extracted the present order of things from the confusion in which they lay, he taught to the souls which were next provided, and placed in the stars, the nature of all things, and the law which they were to follow. And in these settled injunctions consists the declaration of fate. But it would be unprofitable, and indeed endless, to pursue the opinions of the most enlightened of the Heathens concerning a supreme will and the consequent nature of human events. Some maintained, that those things only were possible, which were certainly to take place hereafter, while others asserted the possibility, though the things should never happen. Some, as we have seen, could not understand the condition of man without calling in the controul of fate; while others contended, that what might be satisfactorily explained through the laws of nature and the accidents of fortune, ought to

exclude the interference of fate. Some affirmed all past events to have been necessary, and thence concluded, that future events connected with those must be necessary also. Other philosophers denied both positions.* There is only one more of these notions which shall be noticed, on account of the part which the Christian writers took in the refutation of it. It was the system of those, who, abandoning the agency of the stars, asserted a physical fate in an eternal series and concatenation of causes and effects.† This, however, they still referred to the will of the gods; and thus was produced a necessity in mortal affairs through a divine predestination, notwithstanding the distinctions invented by Chrysippus,‡ in order to rescue his doctrine from that reproach.

* These and many other notions of the same kind, are to be found in the fragment of Cicero De Fato. This with the two books of Divination, and the Treatise of the Nature of the Gods, will give a good view of the opinions of the antients on the subjects in question.

† Qui non astrorum constitutionem, sed omnium connexionem seriémque causarum quâ fit omne quod fit, Fati nomine appellant. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 8.

‡ Chrysippus autem, cùm et necessitatem improbaret, et nihil vellet sine præpositis causis evenire, causarum genera distinguit, ut et necessitatem effugiat, et retineat fatum. Cic. de

This opinion had been encountered by Cicero; and in one part of his argument against the Stoics he is supported by Augustin. Cicero maintained the freedom of human will; and it was in defence of this favourite position, that he denied the power of foretelling future events, the point which his brother Quintus was so anxious to prove.* Augustin concurs with him in the assertion of the free will of man, but corrects his imperfect notions of the prescience of God.† Cicero seems to have feared that future events could not be foreseen, except through the supposition of a fate. While therefore he reprobated the doctrine of a fate, and, at the same time, the knowledge of futurity, he destroyed the perfections of the Deity. But Augustin informs him, that God, by his nature, necessarily knows whatever will be done, yet that man is subject to no fate. The Divine prescience has no influence on human actions; and man himself, not knowing future events, labours to produce them with the full freedom

Fato. This distinction was between proximate and principal, efficient and antecedent causes, &c.

* Cic. De Divinat.

† This important point is carefully discussed in the 9th and 10th Chapters of the 5th Book of Civ. Dei.

of his will. Nor is this freedom violated because the order of things is foreseen. Our wills are themselves a part of that order; and though the actions flow from them, and are their foreseen effects, they are, as to man, substantially and properly free.*

This appeal then to the assistance of fate, whether separate from Providence, or in concurrence with it, is proved to be of no avail to the cause of Paganism; and the question is brought round to the point from which it began; namely, the protection afforded to the empire by the gods of Rome. That these were unable to support the state, was first proved; and when, for the sake of an escape, recourse was had to the supposition of a fate, this has also appeared to be nugatory. Cicero determined against the Stoics, the nullity of fate; and while he refuted others, he was himself corrected by Augustin, who, having maintained with him the freedom of human actions, esta-

* Non est autem consequens, ut si Deo certus est omnium ordo causarum, ideò nihil sit in nostræ voluntatis arbitrio. Et, ipsæ quippe nostræ voluntates in causarum ordine sunt, qui certus est Deo, ejusque præscientiâ continetur: quoniam et humanæ voluntates humanorum operum causæ sunt. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 9.

blished against him the compatibility of the Divine prescience with our moral liberty.* The result is, therefore, that those Pagans who were preserved at the capture of Rome, had no more obligation to their fate, than the empire at large owed to its gods. What the rest of the inhabitants suffered at the hands of Alaric, was the usual treatment of war, or the proper punishment of their sins.—Still there were a few circumstances connected with the fall of the city, from which the vindictive disposition of Hea-

* This is the subject of one of Boëthius's conversations; and the result is similar;—Hæc igitur etiam præcognita liberos habent eventus. De Consolat. Philos. lib. v. Pros. 4. The same conclusion had been drawn by Origen: τὸ τὴν προγνωσιν τῷ Θεῷ μὴ εἶναι καταναγκαστικὴν τῶν προεγνωσμένων πάντως. The question is treated at length in the 6th Book of Eusebius's Preparation. See particularly c. 6 and 11. Milton endeavours to give the highest authority to this doctrine, by ascribing it to the Almighty, concerning the fallen angels.

——— they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain, unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
Both what they judge and what they choose.

Book iii.

thenism drew a malignant satisfaction; and they shall here be noticed, chiefly for the sake of pointing out the sentiments of the early writers of the Church, on one of the most important articles of our religion.

There were two classes of persons who reasoned in this hostile manner. Some, as was lately observed, had been saved from instant death by the influence of the name of Christ. Hence was drawn an argument of singular perverseness, that to preserve an enemy was unworthy of the Deity; and that, in an indulgence granted in common to the believers of Christ, and the haters of his name, a want was betrayed either of sagacity to perceive a just distinction, or of power to enforce it!* To these blasphemers it was answered, that they wholly mistook the moral government of God upon earth, and that they ought to view it in analogy with his natural Providence. "He maketh the sun to shine upon the evil and the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."† Of the civil blessings, therefore, which are poured, in so liberal a manner, from the opened hand of

* Cur ergo ista divina misericordia etiam ad impios ingratósque pervenit? Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 8.

† St. Matt. v. 45.

God, a portion falls on the evil and undeserving. But this goodness is not the effect of weakness or imprudence in the great Author of it. His object is, to soften the hearts of those who share his bounty, and to bring them to repentance.* And it is pleasing to observe, that, while so many Pagans hardened themselves against the experience of Divine mercy, and became more obnoxious to punishment in another world, some of them were effectually touched with remorse by their unexpected deliverance. They repented of their past sins, forsook the worship of their idols, were converted to the faith, and openly justified the preservation which had been extended to their persons.†

The other class dwelt on an accusation of a different kind, which led, without their intention, to the most satisfactory defence of the Gospel. The idolater, unable to vindicate his own deities, whose helplessness was proved by so many convincing instances, thought that

* The same thought is applied by the apostle to the Divine purpose, in the revelation of his will. "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Rom. ii. 4.

† Quidam eorum ista cogitantes, pœnitendo ab impietate se corrigunt. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 8.

their honour might yet be preserved, if he could implicate the God of the Christians in the same failure of protection. It was retorted therefore, with much appearance of triumph, that during the siege, and in the assault of the city, the Christian inhabitants had suffered together with the worshippers of the false gods. They had been wasted with the common famine, and many were slain in the contest, or had fallen into the hands of the Barbarians.* To these objectors, it was replied with equal force of truth, that the sufferings of the Christian are to him no cause of despondency, no proof either of the weakness or malevolence of the Deity whom he serves. The Providence of God has placed him in this world as a candidate for greater happiness in another and eternal state: and knowing that this high reward is reserved for him, he does not expect a present exemption from the evils of life; he patiently waits for that final judgment which shall separate the servants of God, from those that obey him not;†

* Multos, inquiunt, etiam Christianos fames diuturna vastavit,—multi etiam interfecti sunt,—multi etiam captivi ducti sunt. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 11—14.

† This had also been the argument of Tertullian against those, who, in his time, objected to the Christians, that their

and meanwhile makes his very trials conducive to his future happiness. They correct his errors, sober his passions, purify his heart, and tend to preserve him in the fear and favour of God. While, therefore, he joyfully acknowledges blessings, which excite his best gratitude to Heaven, and surpass all the impure enjoyments of wicked men; while he is thankful for the supports and consolations of his daily life, for the testimony of his conscience, and the animating certainty of his Christian hopes, he also confesses, that the very disasters which are allowed to befall him, however misinterpreted by the profane observer, are equally designed for his benefit. His welfare is promoted by the experience of evil, as well as of good; and his superior fortitude arises from his faith. To the insulting question, therefore, "Where is thy God?"* he triumphantly replies—"My

God made no visible distinction between them and the Pagans, in the common events of life;—qui enim semel æternum judicium destinavit, post sæculi finem, non præcipitat discretionem, quæ est conditio judicii, ante sæculi finem. Apol. c. 41.

* Illi probationi ejus insultant, eique dicunt, cùm forte in aliqua temporalia mala devenerit, Ubi est Deus tuus?—Deus meus ubique præsens est, ubique totus, nusquam inclusus, qui possit adesse secretus, abesse non motus. Ille cùm me adversis rebus exagitat, aut merita examinat, aut peccata castigat,

God, different in all his attributes from the false and impotent gods of the Heathen, is to be found wherever his worshippers are. If I am carried into captivity, his consolations shall yet reach me; if I lose the possessions of this life, my precious faith shall still supply their want; and if I die, not as the suffering Heathen dies, by his own impatient and impious hand, but, in obedience to the will of God,* my great reward begins; I shall enter upon a life which will never more be taken from me; and thenceforth all tears shall be wiped from my eyes." Such is the superiority of the Christian under the worst of present evils. The Pagan worships his gods for the sake of temporal good. When, therefore, he falls into calamity, he misses the great object of his prayers. And hence comes his complaint of the want of Providence, and his profligate attempt to confound

mercedémque mihi æternam pro toleratis piè malis temporalibus servat. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 29. See also c. 10.

* This was a triumphant argument with the primitive writers. Some of the greatest and wisest of the Pagans had fled to suicide, as a remedy of evil allowed and dictated by philosophy itself, and were followed with profligate or unthinking admiration. The Christian bore all sufferings through the support of faith; and the inviolable rule was, that life should never be quitted till God called for it in his due time.

the cause of the Almighty with the worship of his own helpless idols.

And here occurs the circumstance, to which particular allusion was just now made. In the tumult and distress which followed the capture of the city, not only were many Christians slain, but the usual respect could not be paid to the dead; and the bodies of the faithful had wanted burial.* The Pagans had long observed the religious attention with which the mortal remains of believers were interred. From the recent privation of these pious ceremonies, therefore, they drew an argument of additional insult, and inferred, that the God of the Christians was indifferent to the protection of his followers, in death as well as in life.

The piety of Christian antiquity has conveyed to us the motives from which proceeded a religious attention to the dead bodies of believers. While living, these had been the temples of the Holy Spirit; and through his guidance, they were impelled to the performance of works acceptable to God. In this sense was interpreted the expostulation of St. Paul to the Corinthians,

* At enim in tantâ strage cadaverum, nec sepeliri potuerunt. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 12.

"Know ye not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"* Those members, therefore, which had been employed as the instruments of the Divine will upon earth, were, though mortal in their nature, to be treated with signal respect, on account of the reverence due to that sacred Guest which had deigned to inhabit, and direct them to the purposes of salvation.† Yet consolation was not wanting to believers, though the desired burial could not be procured. And this resulted from the sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the body to eternal life.‡ They might, and they did, successfully argue with the Pa-

* 1 Cor. vi. 19.

† Nec ideò contemnenda et abjicienda sunt corpora defunctorum, maximèque justorum atque fidelium, quibus tanquam organis et vasis ad omnia bona opera Sanctus usus est Spiritus. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 13. Augustin interprets the words of the Saviour concerning the woman who anointed him, as involving a recommendation of this case. "Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me! for in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial."—Matt. 26. 10.

‡ Ad Dei providentiam, cui placent talia pietatis officia, corpora mortuorum pertinere significant, propter fidem resurrectionis adstruendam. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 13.

gans on inferior principles; and, in a manner which is characteristic of the writings of those ages, they adapted their reasonings to the motives which they knew to be more familiar to the men of nature, than the sublime discoveries of the Gospel.

Much praise had been bestowed on the sentiment of Lucan, that the soldiers of Pompey who lay neglected in the plain of Pharsalia, and whose ashes wanted an urn, had the nobler vault of Heaven for a covering.* Lucan had been preceded in this imagery by the magnificent eulogium, which Xenophon bestowed, with so much art, upon the military life of the Persians, whose house was the earth and the sky, and whose places of repose were the ground which nature abundantly supplied.† This was the admired reasoning of a patriotic philosophy;

* Libera Fortunæ mors est: capit omnia tellus
Quæ genuit;—Cœlo tegitur qui non habet urnam.
Lib. vii.

† Gobrias being asked by Cyrus, whether the Persians or his own people had most beds, tents, houses, &c.? is made to convey a skilful compliment to the former:—*ὑμῖν, νὴ τὸν Δί, εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ στρώματα πλείω ἐστὶ καὶ κλίναι, καὶ οἰκία γε πολὺ μείζων ἡ ὑμετέρα τῆς ἐμῆς· οἷ γε οἰκίᾳ μὲν χρῆσθε γῇ τε καὶ οὐρανῷ, κλίναι δ' ὑμῖν εἰσιν ὁπόσαι γένοιντ' ἄν εὐναὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.* Cyrop. lib. v.

and armies were taught to look forward with magnanimity to fatigues and dangers during life, and to the abandonment of their bodies after death, through the force of motives merely political.* How superior is the privilege of the Christian! Though his mortal part should remain unburied, though it should become the prey of beasts, or though its particles should be scattered through all the elements; yet he retains his sure and certain hope of the resurrection through Jesus Christ. He knows that God is faithful, who hath promised to restore him at the last day; and from the bosom of the earth, from the distant regions of the air, and the most secret recesses of all nature, shall his Almighty power once more collect the parts so long dissevered. The man shall, in a moment of time, be formed anew, and substantially stand before

* Sepulturæ curam etiam eorum philosophi contempserunt: et sæpè universi exercitus, dum pro terrenâ patriâ morerentur, ubi postea jacerent, vel quibus bestiis esca fierent, non curaverunt. Licuítque de hâc re poëtis plausibiliter dicere, "Cœlo tegitur qui non habet urnam." Quantò minùs debent de corporibus insepultis insultare Christianis, quibus et ipsius carnis et membrorum omnium reformatio non solùm ex terrâ, verùm etiam ex aliorum elementorum secretissimo sinu, quò dilapsa cadavera recesserunt, in temporis puncto reddenda, et redintegranda promittitur? Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 12.

his Maker, to receive the eternal reward of his faith and obedience.

It will be of importance to remark in this place, that the same fundamental doctrine which was thus supported by Augustin, had been asserted against the objections of unbelievers, from the first age of Christianity. In the argument of Tatian against the Greeks, who regarded the belief of the resurrection as no more than the fond dream of a mistaken piety, he compares the restoration of the body for future judgment, with the wonderful production of the race of mankind out of their original nothing, and argues that the power of God is equally capable of both operations. You may burn this body; and, by depriving it of the burial which we desire, attempt to scatter its particles beyond the reach of Divine Providence. But you cannot send them beyond the limits of the world itself; and the world belongs to God, and all that it contains, Although, therefore, I should be consumed with fire, or wasted with floods, or torn in pieces by the wild beasts which you may let loose against me, my remains are still laid up in the REPOSITORY OF GOD. They cannot escape his sight, though they should lie hid from every human

eye; and in his own appointed time he will restore them to that connexion and unity, which you impiously labour to dissolve.*

Athenagoras, in his treatise of the Resurrection, united with the authority of Scripture, such philosophy as his age could furnish, in order to prove that the body would be restored to the soul, and that both would exist together in a state of future rewards and punishments. And he drew his reasoning alternately from the constitution of man, from the evident purpose

* Κᾷν πῦρ ἐξαφανίσῃ πᾶν τὸ σαρκίον, ἐξατμισθεῖσαν τὴν ὕλην ὁ κόσμος κεκώρηχεν· κᾷν ἐν ποταμοῖς, κᾷν ἐν θαλάσσαις ἐκδαπανηθῶ, κᾷν ὑπὸ θηρίων διασπασθῶ, ΤΑΜΕΙΟΙΣ ἐναπόκειμαι πλησίον δεσπότου· καὶ ὁ μέν πτωχὸς καὶ ἄθεος οὐκ οἶδε τὰ ἀποκείμενα. Θεὸς δὲ ὁ βασιλεύων, ὅτε βούλεται, τὴν ὁρατὴν αὐτῷ μόνῳ ὑπόστασιν ἀποκαταστήσει πρὸς τὸ ἀρχαῖον. Contr. Græc. c. 9, 10. This, among many other instances, will serve to suggest the sense in which we are to understand the *burning* of the early Christians by their Pagan persecutors. Death was inflicted in a manner, which conveyed a defiance of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. One of the most striking examples of this anti-Christian enmity is seen in the account which Eusebius gives of the martyrdom of Polycarp. The fire not readily consuming him, he was stabbed at the stake. His friends now earnestly begged the body; but the Centurion, instigated also by the Jews, resolved to burn it. Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 15. Compare St. Paul's supposition, 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

of his existence in this life, and from the power and the will of God. This too was the doctrine of Minucius Felix and Tertullian. The former makes Cæcilius caution his opponent against the vulgar notion, that things not capable of being seen by man, do not appear to the eye of God; for whatever is dispersed, passes into the elements, and these are all subject to the Divine inspection and controul.* The latter, in several parts of his Apology, argues with the Gentiles on the ground of their philosophy, and upbraids them with a ready reception of every improbability taught by their own sophists, and an obstinate disbelief of the great and salutary truths of the Scriptures.† He well knew the perverse spirit of Paganism. The time had been, when he indulged against Chris-

* Tu perire et Deo credis, si quid oculis nostris hebetibus subtrahitur? Corpus omne, sive arescit in pulverem, sive in humorem solvitur, vel in cinerem comprimitur, vel in ardorem tenuatur, subducitur nobis; sed Deo, elementorum custodi, reservatur. Dial. p. 326.

† Si quis philosophus affirmet, ut ait Laberius de sententiâ Pythagoræ, hominem fieri ex mulo—nonne consessum movebit, et fidem infiget, etiam ab animalibus abstinendi? At enim Christianus, si de homine hominem, ipsumque de Caio Caium reducere promittat, lapidibus magis, nec saltem cæstibus à populo exigetur. C. 48.

tianity the same profaneness which marked the Heathen with whom he lived; and he penitentially confesses, that the doctrine of the Resurrection was one of the objects of his scorn.* But his heart was gradually subdued by the influence of the religion which he hated. He was converted to the faith, and maintained, with a zeal which might atone for his former infidelity, that God, who raised the world out of nothing, is equally able to restore any part of his creation which he has suffered to perish; that he will call from the earth, the sea, and every part of nature, the bodies of all who have existed from the beginning of the world, and render to every man according to his works, whether they have been good or evil. It is pleasing to see the passions of men unsuspectingly compelled to advance the will of God. The malice of the Pagans thought only of gratifying itself in the wounds which it inflicted on the feelings of those Christians who survived the capture of Rome; and this led Augustin, in conformity with the doctrine of the earlier

* These instances are curious, and throw light on the treatment of St. Paul at Athens:—"When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked." Acts xvii. 32.

fathers, to a solemn and circumstantial declaration of the firm belief of the Church in the resurrection of the body! The objections, therefore, which were drawn from the sufferings of the Christians, as an excuse for the declared impotence of the Heathen deities, were not only unavailing to the Pagan cause, but tended to the more triumphant vindication of the Gospel. The gods were left in their former discredit; and nothing could be more evidently proved, than that the Romans owed neither their personal welfare, nor the establishment of their empire to such protectors. The claim then of temporal benefits arising from the worship of idols, is at end. They did not confer on their votaries the benefits of the "life that now is;" and the first part of our argument is accomplished. Indeed, nothing is more frequently and pointedly asserted by the early vindicators of the Gospel, than that the Romans had obtained their empire before they were possessed of their gods. In the time of Numa, says Tertullian,* their religion was simple, without a

* Frugi relligio, et pauperes ritus, et nulla capitolia certantia cœlo; sed temeraria de cespite altaria, et vasa adhuc Samia, et nidor ex illis, et Deus ipse nusquam. Nondum enim tunc ingenia Græcorum atque Tuscorum fingendis simulachris urbem

pompous worship or a lofty capitol. The altars were occasional, and of turf, the vessels of Samian clay, and the Grecian and Tuscan artists had not yet overwhelmed the city with the images of the gods. And it is allowed that this simplicity continued till the conquest of Asia. The dominion of the Romans, therefore, was not the effect, but the cause of their superstitions; and the new gods of other countries followed in the train of victory.† That nothing might be wanting to the success of their argument, the Christian writers farther reminded their adversaries, that long prosperity and extended dominion had been granted to nations which had never respected or acknowledged the gods of Rome. The Assyrian empire, of which the Romans had heard and written so

inundaverant. Ergo non ante relligiosi Romani quàm magni; ideòque non ob hoc magni, quia relligiosi. Apol. c. 25.

† Undique hospites Deos quærunt, et suos faciunt:—sic dum universarum gentium sacra suscipiunt, etiam regna meruerunt. Min. Felix, Dial. p. 53.—If the assertion of a Christian writer is not allowed, the confession of the Pagans themselves must be conclusive.

Nos in templa tuam Romana accepimus Isin:
Semideósque canes, et sistra jubentia luctus,
Et quem tu plangens hominem testaris Osirin.

Lucan. lib. viii.

much, was established without any aid from the Trojan or Italian mythology.* The Persians were celebrated for conquest, amid the profession of an idolatry not only different from that of Rome, but hostile to it.† The Jews too, who alone possessed the knowledge of the one true God, were, through his signal protection, blessed with great temporal prosperity; and this they forfeited through a criminal attachment to polytheism,‡ on which the Romans credulously relied, as the only means of empire!

* Constat regnum Assyriorum à Nino rege longè latèque porrectum. Si nullo Deorum adjutorio magnum hoc regnum et prolixum fuit, quare Diis Romanis tribuitur Romanum imperium? Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 7.

† Si propriôs Deos habuerunt Assyrii, quasi peritiores fabros imperii construendi atque servandi, nunquidnam mortui sunt, quando et ipsi imperium perdiderunt?—Aut mercede non sibi redditâ (a passing blow at Laomedon and his hireling gods) vel aliâ promissâ majore, ad Medos transire maluerunt, atque indè rursus ad Persas, Cyro invitante, et aliquid commodius pollicente?—ib.

‡ Si non in eum peccâssent impiâ curiositate, tanquam magicis artibus seducti ad alienos Deos et idola defluendo, et postremò Christum occidendo, in eodum regno mansissent. Et nunc quòd per omnes ferè terras gentêsque dispersi sunt, illius unius veri Dei providentia est; ut quòd Deorum falsorum usquequaque simulachra, aræ, luci, templa evertuntur, et sacrificia prohibentur, de codicibus eorum probetur.—ib. c. 34.

They are now dispersed over the earth; and one of the reasons of their dispersion was, that, while they were driven from the territory which God, in his kindness, had conferred on them, they might be compelled to witness the prophesied destruction of their sinful idolatry, and the increasing honours of the name of Christ, whom they had impiously crucified.

By whom then was empire conferred on the Romans? and to whom are to be attributed the evils which attended its progress?

The first of these questions is briefly answered by Tertullian; the second by Augustin. "He is the dispenser of kingdoms, to whom belongs the world which is governed, and man himself who governs it. The changes of secular dominion which arise at different periods of time, are ordained by Him who was before all time: and the rise and fall of states must be referred to Him alone, who existed before human society began."* Yet not to Him are we to ascribe the abuse of power, and the unprin-

* Videte igitur ne ille regna dispenset, cujus est et orbis qui regnatur, et homo ipse qui regnat; ne ille vices dominationum ipsis temporibus in sæculo ordinaverit, qui ante omne tempus fuit, et sæculum corpus temporum fecit: ne ille civitates extollat aut deprimat, sub quo fuit aliquando sine civitatibus gens hominum. Tert. Apol. c. 26.

cipled enlargement of dominion. "God is the creator of every nature, and the bestower of every power. But the abuse of the divine gifts arises from the depravity of the will of man: and this is contrary to nature, and the will of God."* The means, therefore, which are furnished by the Deity, are liable to evil application, through human perverseness. Hence, while the power of Rome is acknowledged to have been derived from Him, his blessed name is free from the imputation of having authorized the extension of its empire, by blood and treachery.

But the time had been, when the Romans were swayed by better motives: and here occurs a distinguished sentiment of Augustin, with which I shall close this part of the subject.

* Sicut enim omnium naturarum creator est, ita omnium potestatum dator, non voluntatum. Malæ quippe voluntates ab illo non sunt; quoniam contra naturam sunt, quæ ab illo est. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 11. This is not a remembrance of Manicheism, but is to be referred to Scripture; St. James, c. i. 13, 14. Augustin adapts the whole of the discussion concerning free-will and fate to the purpose of his argument on the temporal prosperity of the empire. Deus itaque summus et verus, cum Verbo suo et Spiritu Sancto, quæ tria unum sunt,—nullo modo est credendus regna hominum eorúmque dominationes et servitutes, à suæ Providentiæ legibus alienas esse voluisse.—ib.

In the earlier ages of the state, before the love of unlimited power possessed the Romans, they had felt the spirit of true patriotism, and acted on genuine views of civil liberty. They loved their country, and not themselves; and while their private lives were free from offence against the laws, and governed by the rules of decency and temperance, they magnanimously laboured to promote the public good.* This was the foundation of their greatness and their fame. These were their civil virtues; and Providence, which is ever benevolent towards the faintest and most imperfect efforts on the side of goodness, bestowed on courage, disinterestedness, and patriotic principle, the characteristic reward of temporal prosperity.

Let not this animating thought be lost to ourselves. The Roman virtues were of this world; and the consequence annexed to them was a dominion of this world. "Verily, they

* Isti privatas res suas pro re communi, hoc est, republicâ, et pro ejus ærario, contempserunt, avaritiæ restiterunt, consuluerunt patriæ consilio libero; neque delicto secundùm suas leges, neque libidini obnoxii;—hodièque literis et historiâ gloriosi sunt pænè in omnibus gentibus. Non est quod de summi et veri Dei justitiâ conquerantur.—"Perceperunt mercedem suam." Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 15.

have their reward." We have calls to patriotism, which the Pagans never knew: and on an authority superior to all their legislators, we have received those principles which are the foundation of private happiness, and public greatness. The power of Britain does not terminate in civil objects; it is connected with a loftier and more sacred purpose. We are the happy inhabitants of a country which exhibits the profession of the purest Christianity, in conjunction with the soundest of civil governments. Our patriotism, therefore, is exalted by our faith; and we may reasonably hope, that the Divine blessing will descend, in a larger degree, and in a more distinguished manner, on that public spirit which is sanctioned by true religion, and which, through the maintenance of empire, promotes the will of Heaven.

CHAPTER V.

PRETENSION OF PAGANISM TO THE PROMISE OF THE "LIFE TO COME"... DISPROVED THROUGH THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF THE HEATHEN GODS...INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF JUPITER...SOUL OF THE WORLD...ANALYSIS OF THE THEOLOGY OF VARRO...REMARKS.

It has been fully proved, that to bestow temporal prosperity was beyond the power of the Pagan deities, and that the boasted greatness of the Roman empire was derived from causes, on which they had no influence. It remains to be seen, whether the same gods, who were worshipped in vain for the sake of inferior blessings, had in reserve for their votaries, the choicest privileges of Heaven; whether they, who could not direct the events of this world, were the dispensers of happiness in a future state; whether the soul of man were the object of their care, though his bodily protection might be beneath their dignity, or beyond their capacity.

Augustin, in an early view of his subject, seems to have apprehended, that this would be

the loftiest and most laborious part of his task.* But, notwithstanding the extraordinary reputation of one branch of the philosophy, against which he thought it necessary to rouse the higher powers of his mind; notwithstanding the near approaches which it was once supposed to make towards some of the more important truths of scripture, we shall be convinced, by an easier inquiry than was suggested by the fears of Augustin, that the claims of human wisdom are as fallacious as they are arrogant, and that Christian "godliness" alone "hath the promise of the life which is to come."

The refutation of these higher pretensions of the Pagan philosophy began with an exposure of the common opinion concerning the various employments of the gods. The divisions of their power were supposed to be as numerous as the appearances of nature, or the events of human life. From his earliest moments, man was destined to pass through the successive protection of a multitude of deities, each of

* Quæ, nisi fallor, quæstio multò erit operosior, et sublimiori disputatione dignior, ut et contra philosophos in eâ disseratur, non quoslibet, sed et qui apud illos excellentissimâ gloriâ clari sunt, et *nobiscum multa sentiunt*. Civ. Dei, lib. i. c. 36.

them exercising an exclusive and jealous authority, in his limited department. Nay, this separate influence over him was supposed to exist even before the birth of the infant. Lucina was the proper deity to be invoked in his favour.* Diespiter must show him the light; and Opis alone has the privilege of receiving him at his first entrance into the world. He cannot cry till Vaticanus compassionately opens his mouth for the expression of his wants. Levana raises him in her arms from the ground, on which he is duly placed in acknowledgment of the original rights of Tellus. Educa supplies him with meat, Potina with drink. It is the express employment of Rumina to watch over the salubrity of his milk, and Cunina attends him in the agitation of his cradle. His fate, the fixed portion of his life, is sung, at the beginning of his days, by the Carmentes ;† and For-

* Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 11. The instances stated in the text, are a small part of those which this chapter would have afforded. But it is sufficient for the present purpose to name a few deities of each class.

† If Ovid is right, only one of these two sisters looked into futurity.

Altera, quod porro fuerat, cecinisse putatur;
Altera, versurum postmodò quicquid erat.

Fast. lib. i. 635.

tune is permitted to sport with all those events which are not determined by their superior authority.

Nor is it the misfortune of the smaller deities alone to be thus circumscribed in office and authority. The great and select gods are themselves subjected to similar disgrace. Apollo was to be exclusively consulted for the knowledge of future events. Mercury was the proper genius of gain. From Janus* was the mere initiation of human affairs; for it was the privilege of Terminus, that in him alone was their conclusion.

The heaven, the earth and the sea, were also

* This god was of much importance to the Pagans; for the prayers addressed to the other deities were to pass through the gate kept by him; and therefore he was to be propitiated in the first instance. This is the answer which Ovid makes him give, when questioned about the custom by the worshipper:

Ut possis aditum per me, qui limina servo,
Ad quoscunque velim prorsùs, habere Deos.

Fast. lib. i. 170.

We find the same persuasion concerning him in the time of Arnobius. Quem in cunctis anteponitis precibus, et viam vobis pandere Deorum ad audientiam creditis. Lib. iii. Augustin takes no small satisfaction in arguing, that this prime god was inferior to the little TERMINUS, upon the principle, that a thing ended is better than a thing begun.—Unhappy Janus!

parcelled out into separate governments. Sometimes, indeed, the same deity was called to preside over different things, with a new official name. But it happened, on the other hand, that all the parts, even of the same element, were not subject to the same deity. While the remoter sky acknowledged its Jupiter, the region of the air below it was possessed by Juno. Two goddesses shared with Neptune the management of the sea. Its depths and recesses were the province of Salacia, while the waves which continually came to the shore, were conducted by Venilia. Proserpine rightfully took from Pluto the inferior portion of the earth; and though the blaze of the smith belonged to Vulcan, the domestic flame was reserved for the more gentle administration of Vesta!*

Hence arose the first question urged by the Christian advocates against the lofty pretensions of their antagonists. From gods like these, what transcendant blessings can be reasonably expected by their votaries? How shall beings, whose utmost effort it is to direct some unim-

* Ignem mundi leviorem, qui pertinet ad usus hominum faciles, non violentiorem, qualis Vulcani est, ei deputandam esse crediderunt. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 16.

portant business upon earth, be themselves possessed of immortality? How shall they, whose widest government is but a limited department of the world, be able to bestow the immeasurable rewards, the infinite happiness of the "life to come?"*

These minute distinctions, however, were disallowed or disregarded by the graver and more philosophical Pagans. It was their profession, that the different employments assigned to the deities, whether the inventions of the poets, or the superstitions of the vulgar, had always been understood by the wise in another and an higher sense. The numerous deities fancied by the people were but portions of the universal Jupiter. He was the original god, and contained in himself the whole catalogue of celestial beings, which were, in truth, no other than his virtues, and properties, wrongly attributed to a multiplicity of supposed persons, and expressed by different names. But if we inquire of what nature was the Jupiter, thus sagaciously discovered, and loftily proclaimed; the same persons who had so easily disposed of the other deities

* Quis ferat dici atque contendi, Deos illos, quibus rerum exiguarum singulis singula distribuuntur officia, vitam æternam cuiquam præstare? Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 1.

in his favour, are compelled to confess, that he was the SOUL OF THE WORLD.

This opinion seems to have arisen either from a partial adoption of the doctrine of Timæus the Locrian, or from a persuasion that notwithstanding better appearances, his doctrine was finally reducible to it. According to the terms of his system, the world was an animal, endued not only with life, but with intelligence.* It was immortal and indestructible, except by him who first set it in order; it was happy, and in a certain sense a deity.† The seat of its soul was the centre. From thence it was extended to the outer parts, and pervaded and protected the whole by its informing and vivifying qualities.‡ The leading principles of this treatise were adopted and expanded by Plato in his dialogue distinguished by the name of Timæus. But the later cosmologists seem to

* Δεῖ λέγειν, τόνδε τὸν κόσμον ζῶον ἔμψυχον ἔννουντε. Plat. Tim. p. 1048.

† Τοῦτον ἐποίει Θεὸν γεννατὸν, οὔποκα φθαρησόμενον ὑπ' ἄλλῳ αἰτίῳ, ἔξω τῷ ἀυτὸν συντεταγμενῳ Θεῷ, εἴποκα δήλετο ἀυτὸν διαλύειν.—Διαμένει ἄρα, τοιόσδε ὤν, ἄφθαρτος καὶ ἀνώλεθρος καὶ μακάριος. Tim. Locr. Opusc. Mythol. Gale, p. 546.

‡ Τὰν δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ ψυχὰν μεσόθεν ἐξάψας ἐπάγαγεν ἔξω. ib. p. 548.

have been perfectly satisfied with the divinity bestowed on the world, whose properties were deemed so high and absolute, that the demiurge, from whom they were said to come, was either excluded as an unnecessary being, or was incorporated with the world as its animating principle. It is the persuasion of some of the minor Greek mythologists, that the world is governed, like the body of man, by a soul; and this is called Jupiter: that the name is derived from the cause of life, or its preservation; and that in this sense Jupiter is said to reign over the universe.*

Thus too he is the father of gods and men; that is, the nature of the world is the cause of their hypostasis, as parents are the authors of being to their children.† In the same age, perhaps, with Phurnutus, Virgil had become

* Ὥσπερ δὲ ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ ψυχῆς διοικόμεθα, οὕτω καὶ ὁ κόσμος ψυχὴν ἔχει τὴν συνέχουσαν ἀυτόν· καὶ αὕτη καλεῖται Ζεύς· πότερον διὰ τὸ σώζουσα καὶ αἰτία οὖσα τοῖς ζῶσι τοῦ ζῆν, διὰ τοῦτο βασιλεύειν ὁ Ζεὺς λέγεται τῶν ὅλων, ἢ ὡς ἄν καὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡμῶν βασιλεύειν ῥηθείη. Phurnut. de Nat. Deorum, c. 2. Opusc. Mythol. Gale.

† Ὁ Ζεὺς πατὴρ λέγεται θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων εἶναι διὰ τὴν τοῦ κόσμου φύσιν αἰτίαν γεγονέναι τῆς τούτων ὑποστάσεως, ὡς οἱ πατέρες γεννῶσι τὰ τέκνα. ib. c. 9.

the patron of the same doctrine, and identified Jupiter with the soul of the world:

——————— Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrásque tractúsque maris, cœlumque profundum.
Georg. iv. 221.

Indeed, that the gravest authority may not be wanting to this doctrine, he makes Anchises deliver it to Æneas in the shades, where the secrets of the mundane system are understood without a chance of error.

Principio cœlum ac terras, campósque liquentes,
Lucentémque globum lunæ, Titaniáque astra
Spiritus intus alit, totámque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.
Æn. 6.

This then is the opinion which we find to have been so prevalent among many of the great and the learned Pagans in the time of Augustin.* By these the existence of a deity, governing all things by his supreme power, was disallowed; and Jupiter, as was lately remarked, was swallowed up in the soul of the world.

* Hæc omnia quæ dixi, et quæcunque non dixi, (non enim omnia dicenda arbitratus sum;) hi omnes Dii Deæque sit unus Jupiter;—sive sint, ut quidam volunt, omnia ista partes ejus, sive virtutes ejus, sicut eis videtur, quibus eum placet esse mundi animum, quæ sententia velut magnorum multorumque doctorum est. Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 11.

But, though maintained with much apparent authority, this philosophy was attended with still greater absurdity than the superstition, or the levity, which it affected to correct. For if the minor deities were independent of one another, and often at variance (a case commonly supposed), and if they were no more than parts of the same Jupiter; Jupiter, in his nature and properties, must be at variance with himself. Again, if every thing was traced to Jupiter, he was to be worshipped in every thing; and it was a received doctrine, that a failure in the services due to him, was a just cause of his displeasure. But by the same philosophers, the constellations were said to be parts of Jupiter, and to be endued with life and rational souls; yet it is certain, that at Rome few altars were erected to them.* Jupiter, therefore, obtained but a partial attention; and while he was pleased that some of his qualities were duly honoured, he must have resented the neglect which was shown to the rest. Nor was this system less impious, than it was absurd. For

* Quas (aras) tamen paucissimis siderum statuendas esse putaverunt, et singillatim sacrificandum. Si igitur irascuntur qui non singillatim coluntur, non metuunt, paucis placatis, toto cœlo irato vivere? Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 11.

if Jupiter is the soul of the world, the world itself is pronounced by the same authority to be his visible body. Every object, therefore, which we see and touch, is a part of him, and he is perpetually subject to the controul and disposal of man. Some, indeed, were aware of this mortifying consequence, and endeavoured to obviate it. They, therefore, excluded beasts, and the inanimate parts of nature from any participation in him, and confined this privilege to rational creatures. But little or nothing was gained by this precaution; for if Jupiter is mankind, he is still exposed to many sorts of injury and indignity. He suffers whatever man suffers; he is affected by pain, disgrace, and labour; he dies in men; and, as Augustin condescends to remark, is whipt in boys!*

Notwithstanding these attempts therefore to

* Quid infelicius credi potest, quàm Jovis partem vapulare, cùm puer vapulat? Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 11.—No writer, with whom I am acquainted, talks with so much horror of his early sufferings, as Augustin. Horace could smile at the calamities inflicted upon him by the too vehement hand of Orbilius. Augustin never remembers his treatment but with sighs and tears. In one place he intimates, that if it were proposed to him to begin life again, he would refuse the offer—and chiefly on account of the early miseries of learning!

compound all the deities into Jupiter, and to establish a god sufficiently dignified to provide for the eternal welfare of mankind, the system of the philosophers is compelled, by the force of superior absurdity, to return to the opinion of the vulgar, to the divided agency of "gods many, and lords many;"* and this is the light in which the principle of idolatry was constantly and truly viewed by the inspired writers, and the advocates of the early Christian church.

This conclusion is strengthened by another circumstance, curious in itself, as well as important to the subject. It is remarkable, that some of those, whose philosophy was most decidedly pledged to the maintenance of the sole prerogative of Jupiter, yet joined in upholding a civil polytheism, however contrary to their favourite doctrine, and were very careful in ascertaining the provinces, and separating the respective employments commonly attributed to the other deities!

* Whitby, in conjunction with most of the commentators, properly maintains, that this passage, 1 Cor. viii. 5. refers to the gods, or idols of the Heathen. Le Clerc had fancied, that by "gods in heaven," are meant God and the angels; and by "gods in the earth," magistrates, who are also called "the lords of the world!"

It was the declared opinion of Varro, that Jupiter was the soul of the world.* Nay, so exalted was his notion of Jupiter, understood in this sense, that, by an error common to other Heathen writers, he supposed that deity to be the real object of worship to the Jews, who adored him without an image, but under another name!† Yet Varro, thus adverse to the popular claims in favour of any deity beneath Jupiter, employs his extraordinary learning and acuteness in describing the duties of his fellow-citizens to the entire establishment of Roman gods! He professes to take this care, upon a patriotic principle, more serviceable than that which influenced the conduct of Me-

* Varro apertissimè dicit, Deum se arbitrari esse animam mundi, et hunc ipsum mundum esse Deum. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 9.

† Hunc Varro credit etiam ab his coli, qui unum Deum solum sine simulacro colunt, sed alio nomine nuncupari. Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 9. In the same spirit, Tacitus interprets the institution of the Sabbath into a respect for Saturn. Hist. lib. v. c. 4. He finds also the Roman gods in the religious worship of the Germans. The Gauls furnished a similar interpretation to Cæsar. lib. vi. And in the Isis and Osiris of Plutarch, the names of persons and things belonging to the Jewish history are incorporated into the Egyptian fables:—*εἰσὶ κατάδηλοι τὰ Ἰουδαϊκὰ παρέλκοντες εἰς τὸν μῦθον.* c. 31.

tellus and Æneas. The former rescued the sacred utensils of Vesta from her flaming temple; the latter piously preserved the Penates from the conflagration of Troy. But Varro undertakes the protection of the deities from the injurious effects of time rather than from the incursions of an enemy; nor will he allow the rites of deities so long respected and sanctioned by the state, to fall into neglect and oblivion.* He therefore interposes in favour of those whom he knows at the same time to be without authority or existence, and prescribes, with a laboriousness and anxiety which would appear to be the result of a settled conviction, the religious services to which each divinity is entitled from the gratitude of Rome! He reasons on his design, as if the effects of it were, in the highest degree, important and beneficial. It is not sufficient, that we allow the general power of the gods. We must know the departments over which they respectively preside.

* In eo ipso opere dixit se timere nè pereant (Dii), non incursu hostili, sed civium negligentiâ, de quâ illos velut ruinâ liberari à se dicit, et in memoriâ bonorum per hujusmodi libros recondi atque servari utiliore curâ quàm Metellus de incendio sacra Vestalia, et Æneas de Trojano excidio penates liberâsse prædicatur. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 2.

Æsculapius therefore is to be remembered in his particular character as the god of Medicine; otherwise we shall be ignorant of the proper objects for which we are to petition him. And so of the rest; for, the want of this specific information will expose us to a thousand absurdities in our prayers; and we shall be in danger of doing that, with religious seriousness, which we see practised for the sake of pastime, by the mimi on the stage; we shall ask water from Bacchus, and wine from the Lymphæ!*

Varro therefore, after the open expression of a philosophical opinion hostile to the common superstition, is again the patron of a system which he had wished to explode; and he labours to re-establish the same division of power and office among the gods, which yet he had confidently resolved into Jupiter alone! But it has already appeared, that deities thus numerous and weak were wholly incompetent to satisfy the expectation of their votaries. Their own controul was narrow and unimportant; and they could not confer on others the bless-

* Ex eo enim poterimus, inquit, scire quem, cujúsque rei usâ, Deum advocare atque invocare debeamus; ne faciamus mimi solent, et optemus à Libero aquam, à Lymphis vinum. v. Dei, lib. iv. c. 22.

ings of eternity which were beyond the limits of their jurisdiction, or exceeded the powers of their nature.

Such then is the dilemma with which the patrons of idolatry were harassed by the Christian writers. If the gods are supposed to exist, the meanness of their nature, the insignificance of their employments, and the mutual checks resulting from an authority thus various and divided, sufficiently show how incapable they are of bestowing the great rewards of the life to come. On the other hand, if all the gods are resolved into Jupiter, and if Jupiter himself is resolved into the soul of the world, the deity becomes a mere physical principle. There is no longer a Providence; and consequently, the expectation of a future retribution is at an end.

A nearer and more particular view of the system of Varro will inform us, what was the real nature of the Roman theology. Besides the classical amusement which it may produce, and its illustration of the principles of those books with which you are daily conversant, it will convince us all, that the efforts of natural wisdom were totally incompetent to the discovery of religious truth; that the Pagan worship

was a mixture of ignorance, superstition, and duplicity; that it was unworthy of the deity, and therefore falsely aspired to the privilege which was claimed for it, of bestowing eternal happiness.

The "Antiquities" of Varro are unfortunately lost. However, from the notices of this work which remain in other writers,* we are to infer that it was one of the choicest monuments of genius and patriotism, of which antient Rome had to boast. For the principal knowledge which we have of this Pagan treatise, we are indebted to Christianity; and from the minute statement of its plan by Augustin alone we are enabled to collect both its object and its character.

The whole work consisted of forty-one books, which were divided into two unequal parts.† The first of these treated "Of things human;" the second, "Of things divine." On the former argument were employed twenty-four

* In the edition of Varro which I use—Durdrechti 1619, the fragments are copious. They might yet be increased.

† Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 3. The sentences of Augustin are frequently long and involved; and, in order to give perspicuity and briskness to his statement, it is necessary to take it to pieces, and set it up again in a more convenient form.

books, to which was also prefixed an introductory book, explanatory of the general nature of that division of the subject. But it is with the second part that we are principally concerned. To this also was prefixed, in one book, a discourse concerning the subject that remained to be treated. In the distribution of the subject itself, the same order was observed, which had been established in the former portion of the work; and from persons, who were first considered, the discussion proceeded to places, times, and things. In this fourfold division therefore were described the officiators in the solemnities of the gods; the temples, or spots, in which any religious rites were performed; the festival-days set apart for divine celebrations, and the sacred rites themselves, whether of a public or a private nature; and to each division were allotted three books.* But the description of a pompous and circumstantial worship, without a statement of the objects for the sake of which it was instituted, would have been of little value. We know too, from the confession of Varro, that what the Romans most desired, was, some information concerning

* In the former part, each division contained six books.

the gods themselves.* In order therefore to gratify this curiosity, he added a fifth division, containing also three books. In the first, were enumerated the known gods; in the second, the unknown; or, as the term seems to be explained in another place, those gods, concerning whose authority, or whose proper manner of worship, doubts were entertained.† In the last, were described the principal and select deities.

* Quia oportebat dicere, et maximè id expectabatur, quibus exhibeant, de ipsis quoque Diis tres conscripsit extremos. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 3.

† These uncertain gods of Varro necessarily remind us of "the unknown God" of the Athenians. The power of the Pagan deities was split into departments; and sometimes an event occurred which could not be attributed with certainty to any department. In such cases, they made their acknowledgments at large to the god or goddess within whose presidency it might be. See note to p. 62. Augustin justly triumphs over Varro's indifference even towards the known gods:—Cum in hoc libello (the second book of his fifth division) dubias de Diis opiniones posuero, reprehendi non debeo. Qui enim putabit judicari oportere et posse, cùm audîerit, faciet ipse. Ego citiùs perduci possum, ut in primo libro quæ dixi, in dubitationem revocem, quàm in hoc quæ præscribam, omnia ut ad aliquam dirigam summam. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 17. The true theological principle is, not to surrender what we know, because some things remain unknown. Varro reverses this; and is ready to doubt even his known gods, rather than speak, with any positiveness, about the unknown.

And hence were formed sixteen books, on the gods, and the worship due to them by the Romans.

The theology thus taught by Varro is divided into three branches, the mythic, or fabulous; the civil; and the natural. The first he confines to the poets, and pronounces it to be best adapted to the entertainments of the theatre. In this part of Pagan theology too, he is compelled to confess, as others did, that there were many things unworthy of the gods, and deserving the severest reprehension: and it is observable, that in the explanations of their system, the Heathen mythologists refused to allow the validity of any arguments brought against them from this branch of their superstition. One deity is supposed to spring from the head of Jupiter, and another from his thigh. Some of the celestials are celebrated as accomplished thieves in their own persons, and the patrons of thieving in others. Some are represented as descending from their dignity for some base or immoral purpose, or engaged in the menial service of their very worshippers;* and most

* In eo (it is Varro who speaks of the fabulous theology) sunt multa contra dignitatem et naturam immortalium ficta. In hoc enim est, ut Deus alius ex capite, alius ex femore sit;

of them have their acts of lewdness and profligacy recorded in all the wanton ornament of verse. It was attempted indeed, by some writers, who were either zealous for the honour of the gods, or anxious to discover a philosophy hidden under the veil of licentiousness, to interpret these descriptions in a manner that should be less offensive to decency and common sense.* Accordingly, Varro himself, in aid of his reprobation of such histories, solves that of Saturn into the philosophy of the earth. Saturn swallowed his own children; but the meaning of the fable is, that the earth receives again into its bosom those seeds which it had previously

in hoc, ut Dii furati sint, ut adulteraverint, ut servierint homini. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 5.

* After the successful propagation of Christianity, these stories were allegorized by the later Platonics through another motive. Their literal meaning would prove the Heathen gods to have been the worst of men; and this was one of the strong arguments of the early writers of the Church against the practice of idolatry. Porphyry therefore and Proclus, in their interpretations of the secret meaning of Homer, drew a code of morals from the wanderings of Ulysses, and a system of rational theology from his tales of the gods. Plotinus bestowed the same decent industry on the worship of Venus, and made her outward rites to signify much hidden sanctity; priscorum de Venere fabulas ferè omnes ad res sanctas et morales ingeniosè trahit. Mosheim, Dissert. Eccles. vol. i. p. 141.

produced.* Yet, notwithstanding his occasional attempts to cover the deformity of this part of the Heathen theology, he is content to abandon it to the scorn which it so justly deserved, and from which he was conscious that it could not be rescued by any contrivance. Accordingly, the poets were left to indulge their imaginations as they pleased; and no vindication of the Pagan superstition was seriously thought of by Varro within their licentious department.†

The ostensible support which he gave was to the second, the civil branch. This, as he acknowledges, had for its object the benefit of the state; and indeed it is obvious, not only from the subject itself, but from the manner in which he treated it, that his patronage of this description of religious ceremonies sprung from no settled belief in their efficacy towards the future happiness of the soul, but was the effect of political motives only. He saw that the people could not be controlled without some-

* Opinatur Varro, quòd pertineat Saturnus ad semina, quæ in terram, de quâ oriuntur, iterum recidunt. Itémque alii alio modo et similiter cætera. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 8.

† Loquebatur de fabulosâ (theologiâ) quam liberè à se putavit esse culpandam.—ib. c. 5.

thing which should look like religion, and promise occupation or amusement to their restless minds. Varro therefore joined with other writers of the gravest authority, in securing the public tranquillity through the maintenance of those superstitions which he inwardly despised. Polybius drops a sentiment of this nature amidst the high praises which he bestows on the religious habits of the Romans; and Varro confesses, that, if he had been called to legislate for Rome in its infant state, he would have thought it prudent not to institute the very ceremonies which he openly defends; but he was born in a late age of the republic, and pleaded his justification in the force of the custom which he followed!*

What then was the nature of the civil theology thus recommended? It consisted in the knowledge of the deities to be worshipped, of the ceremonies appropriated to them by the

* Nonne ita confitetur, non se illa judicio suo sequi, quæ civitatem Romanam instituisse commemorat; ut si eam civitatem novam constitueret, ex naturæ potiùs formulâ Deos nominaque Deorum se fuisse dedicaturum, non dubitet confiteri? Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 31. This is repeated, lib. vi. c. 4: ex naturæ formulâ se scripturum fuisse, si novam ipse conderet civitatem: quia verò jam veterem invenerat, non se potuisse nisi ejus consuetudinem sequi.

authority of the state, and of the sacrifices to be offered by the people.* Every citizen therefore was interested in this intelligence, upon the principle already explained; but to the priests it was of particular importance, for on them rested the public administration of the ceremonies. But who were the gods, to whom these services were appointed by the state? For the most part, they were the same with those already reprobated by Varro. It was the opprobrium of the civil theology, that, whatever distinctions were attempted in its favour, it constantly relapsed into the fabulous.† The cause of the state was, in fact, the cause of the poets; and if at any time it exhibited rites more particularly its own, they were, if possible, still baser and more licentious than the performances which the stage produced for the common amusement of the people. This will appear from a short reference: 1st, to the statues of the gods. 2d, to the scenic games appointed to their honour. And 3d, to some

* In quo est, quos Deos publicè colere, quæ sacra et sacrificia facere quemque par sit. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 5.

† Nec alii Dii ridentur in theatris, quàm qui adorantur in templis; nec aliis ludos exhibetis, quàm quibus victimas immolatis. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 6.

of the ceremonies expressly ordered by the senate, and deemed, in a peculiar manner, religious.

1. The statues, sanctioned by the approbation of the pontifices, were in exact agreement with the descriptions of the poets in shape, age, sex, dress, and other circumstances.* The state Jupiter had a beard; and the state Mercury had none. In the same spirit of conformity, adoration was paid to an aged Saturn, and to a youthful Apollo. And so of the rest. Nay, the very nurse of Jupiter had its statue in the Capitol. This was a boldness which equalled all the indiscretion of the poets. Indeed it justified the doctrine of Euhemerus, which had notwithstanding given so much offence to the piety of Rome. It practically allowed what had been so scandalously related by that historian, who affirmed the mortality of all the gods, and gave an account of their births and burials!†

* Revocatur igitur ad theologiam civilem theologia fabulosa; et hæc tota quæ meritò culpanda et respuenda judicatur, pars hujus est quæ colenda atque observanda censetur. Quid enim aliud ostendunt illa simulachra, formæ, ætates, sexus, habitus Deorum? Nunquid barbatum Jovem, imberbem Mercurium poëtæ habent, pontifices non habent? Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 7.

† Quid de ipso Jove senserunt, qui ejus nutricem in Capitolio

2. Livy tells us, for what purpose scenic games were first appointed at Rome:* and it is too notorious to be dwelt upon, that the most popular stage productions of the poets were frequently performed, by order of the state, either for the sake of averting misfortunes, or of doing honour to some particular deities. Arnobius informs us what subjects were supposed to be most acceptable to them. We might be inclined to pardon Hercules, who felt a complacency from the performance of the Trachiniæ of Sophocles; or the play, honoured with his own name, by Euripides. But unfortunately for the credit of civil theology, Jupiter took a particular satisfaction in the repetition of his own adulterous exploits in the Amphitryo of Plautus; and if the impure dance of Europa, or Leda, of Ganymede, or Danaë, were added, he was effectually soothed, and his worshippers had nothing more to fear from his indignation.†

posuerunt? Nonne attestati sunt Euemero, qui omnes tales Deos, non fabulosâ garrulitate sed historicâ diligentiâ, homines fuisse mortalésque conscripsit? ib.

* Lib. vii. c. 2.

† Ponit animos Jupiter, si Amphitryo fuerit actus pronunciatúsque Plautinus? Aut si Europa, si Leda, Ganymedes fuerit saltatus, aut Danaë, motum compescit irarum? Arnob. lib. 7.

It needs not to be added, what similar subjects were preferred by the other deities whose worship was prescribed by the state. We see enough to convince us, that the civil theology is thus far the same with the fabulous, and therefore liable to the same reprobation.

3. What were the rites which civil theology might claim, in a more peculiar manner, for its own, may be seen in the practices of the Capitol and the services solemnly prescribed for the gods.

Seneca, in a treatise which is lost, described the superstitious and degrading practices, which prevailed under the sanction of the pontifices.* In comparison of these, he is inclined to excuse the madness of the Egyptians themselves. Osiris was, indeed, periodically lost; lost by

* In eo libro quem contra superstitiones condidit, multò copiosiùs atque vehementiùs reprehendit ipse civilem istam et urbanam theologiam, quàm Varro theatricam atque fabulosam. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 10. The whole chapter is very curious. It is important too, as it proves the degrading nature of idolatry. The practices of the Capitol would not elevate the character of the savages of New Zealand. This treatise of Seneca is also alluded to by Tertullian, who draws some advantage to his argument from it:—Infrendite, inspumate, iidem estis qui Senecam aliquem pluribus et amarioribus de vestrâ superstitione perorantem probatis. Apol. c. 12.

those who never possessed him, and joyfully found again by those who never lost him. This was an annual folly. But look at the daily ones of the Capitol. One officer attends to tell Jupiter what o'clock it is; another is his lictor; and another, by the movement of his arms, seems as if he meant to be his anointer.* Juno also has her female attendants. Some stand at a reverential distance from her statue, and skilfully twist their fingers, as if they were curling her hair, and had to perform the part of her dressing women. The same attention is shewn to Minerva; and some hold looking-glasses for both. But the gods are waited upon for civil business also. Some come to submit their law-suits to them, offer the pleadings to their inspection, and instruct them in the merits of their cases. Others beg them to become their sureties. Meanwhile, a decrepit old mime,

* Alius horas Jovi nunciat, alius lictor est, alius unctor, qui vano motu brachiorum imitatur ungentem. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 10. This is preceded by the mention of another office. Alius numina Deo subjicit. Was the superiority of the Capitoline Jupiter proclaimed aloud at stated times, that the other deities might observe a due distance in their pretensions? Homer sometimes makes Jupiter assert his rights, as if they were in some danger of being forgotten or contested:—

Γνώσετ' ἔπειθ', ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἁπάντων. Il. lib. 8.

now useless for the stage, acts every day before the statues, with such small strength as he has; as if what had been long since discarded by men, were good enough to be offered to the gods.*

However, this absurd dedication of useless services is innocent in comparison of what remains; for some women, who fancy themselves the favourites of Jupiter, come to sit near him in the Capitol, notwithstanding the presence of Juno, and her known irritation at these intrusions upon her prerogative. But vanity overcomes their fear, and they are already to encounter every danger for the sake of their dear Jupiter! †

If to these enormities we add the profligate deifications ordered by the senate, and the immorality essentially connected with the most solemn of the Roman ceremonies, the character of the civil theology will be concluded, and the cause of the poets amply avenged.

* Doctus archimimus senex jam decrepitus, quotidiè in Capitolio mimum agebat, quasi Dii libenter spectarent, quem homines desierant. ib.

† Sedent quædam in Capitolio, quæ se à Jove amari putant, nec Junonis quidem, si credere poetis velis, iracundissimæ, respectu terrentur. ib.

It is impossible to allude, without shame, to the foul histories of Larentina and Flora, to whom, notwithstanding, divine honours were paid by order of the state.* Augustin justly observes, that if the scandal belonging to these impure deities had been the mere effect of poetic licentiousness, the defenders of Paganism would gladly have availed themselves of so convenient a refuge; and enormities, more than usually outrageous, would have been charged to the account, already too great, of the fabulous theology.†

But a similar viciousness belonged to their gravest services. In the sacred rites of Juno, as they were practised in her own Samos, she was supposed to be given in marriage to Jupi-

* Lactantius gives a fuller view of what he calls proprias Romanorum religiones, in the 20th and 21st chapters of his first book, Instit. The Romans scrupled indeed to sacrifice children to Saturn, as the Carthaginians did: but every other foreign abomination was welcome to the Capitol. Quòd ei Pœni suos filios sacrificaverunt, non recepere Romani. At verò ista magna Deorum mater etiam Romanis templis castratos intulit, atque istam sævitiam morémque servavit. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 26.

† Hæc si poëtæ fingerent, si mimi agerent, ad fabulosam theologiam dicerentur proculdubiò pertinere, et à civilis theologiæ dignitate separanda judicarentur. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 7.

ter; and the nuptial ceremonies were circumstantially represented by the priests.

The worship of Ceres too, renewed the violence done to Proserpine; and the god Pluto, her uncle, was pursued with lighted torches, in imitation of the fires once borrowed from Ætna for her discovery. The lamentations for Adonis were a principal part of the profligate rites of Venus;—and, above all, the processions of the Galli, and their impure actions in honour of the mother of the gods, exceeded in baseness and ribaldry whatever the poets had loosely written, or the stage, amidst all its pruriency, had ventured to represent.* In his youth, Augustin had witnessed these abominable rites, and partaken in the impious celebrations.† He

* Vicit Matris magnæ omnes Deos filios, non numinis magnitudo, sed criminis. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 26.

† Veniebamus nos etiam aliquando adolescentes ad spectacula ludibriáque sacrilegiorum: spectabamus arreptitios, audiebamus symphoniacos, ludis turpissimis, qui Diis Deabúsque exhibebantur, oblectabamur. Cœlesti virgini, et Berecynthiæ matri Deorum omnium, ante ejus lecticam, die solenni lavationis ejus, talia per publicum cantitabantur à nequissimis scenicis, qualia non dico matrem Deorum, sed matrem qualiumcunque senatorum, imò verò qualia nec matrem ipsorum scenicorum deceret audire. Civ. Dei, lib. ii. c. 4. Compare the confession of Arnobius: lib. i.—Venerabar, O cœcitas! nuper simulacra

speaks of them, therefore, with equal knowledg and detestation. Nor indeed is any thing mor impressive than the manner in which some (the early Christians refer to the practices (their past idolatry. We see at once the sham and triumph of their minds; and the confessio of their Pagan offences borrows an animatio from the consciousness that they have now nearer knowledge of God and their duty, an are raised to the hopes of Heaven through th happy acceptance of a purer faith.

Such were the superstitions publicly sanc tioned and allowed by the senate of Rome. We have seen with what bitterness Senec inveighed against them, and with what zea they were recommended by Varro. What the were the motives of a conduct thus different

modò ex fornacibus prompta, in incudibus Deos et ex malle fabricatos; with his fine apostrophe to the true God: O ma ime, O summe rerum invisibilium Procreator! O ipse invis et nullis unquam comprehense naturis! Dignus, dignus es ver si modò te dignum mortali dicendum est ore, cui spirans omn intelligénsque natura, et habere et agere nunquam desinat gr tias; cui totâ conveniat vitâ genu nixo procumbere, et continu tis precibus supplicare. ib.

* Hæc dedecora non poetarum, sed populorum; non mim rum, sed sacrorum; non theatrorum, sed templorum; id es non fabulosa, sed civilis theologiæ. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 7.

The intolerance of Paganism compelled Varro to uphold the civil establishment of its gods. With a slavish patriotism, therefore, he enjoined to others a political reverence for the objects of his own contempt, and gave countenance to a system useful only for the purpose of deceit.*

Seneca was of a different temperament, but finally swayed by the same fears. His disposition to boldness of words led him to indulge his censure of the worship that prevailed around him. But his practice betrays the servile principle by which he was actuated; and he closes his courageous invective with the memorable profession, that the impropriety of these rites ought to be no impediment to the performance of them. The public authority has enjoined them, and therefore they are to be received. They may be unworthy of the gods, but they are acceptable to the state, by whose will they are appointed!†

* Hic certè ubi potuit, ubi ausus est, ubi impunitum putavit, quanta mendacissimis fabulis naturæ Deorum fieret injuria, sine caligine ullius ambiguitatis expressit. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 5.

† Ait enim; Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Diis grata. Augustin justly charges him

We come then to the last species of theology, the natural; the object of which was to inquire concerning the gods, who they were, where they resided, their descent and quality, when they began to exist; whether they were created or eternal; whether they sprung from the fire of Heraclitus, the numbers of Pythagoras, or the atoms of Epicurus; and other such questions.

This, Varro believed to be the only true and dignified part of religion; but judging it unfit for the use of the people at large, he confined the knowledge of it to the philosophers; to the private opinions of speculative men, or the disputations of the schools.*

His opinion then, in agreement with that of the principal men of letters at Rome, was, that God was the soul of the world, and that the world itself was a God,† compounded of a soul

with hypocrisy, and the guilt of deceiving the people, who must have thought his worship of the gods sincere. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 10.

* Varro thus briefly expresses the use and application of each branch of his theology: Mythicon appellant, quo maximè utuntur poetæ; physicon, quo philosophi; civile, quo populi: —nihil in hoc genere culpavit, quod physicon vocavit. Removet tamen hoc genus à foro, id est, à populis; scholis verò et parietibus clausit. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 5.

† Dicit ergo Varro, adhuc de naturali theologiâ præloquens;

and a body. But having thus bestowed on the universe an apparent unity of existence and design, he proceeds to divide it into two great portions, the heaven and the earth; and these again are subdivided: the former, into the æther or superior sky, and the air; the latter into water, and the ground on which we tread. All these divisions are full of souls, which, however, are distinguished in dignity according to the places which they respectively occupy. In the sky and air, are immortal souls; in the water and on the earth, are mortal ones. The space between the highest vault of heaven, and the circle of the moon, is possessed by constellations and stars. These are not only æthereal souls, but celestial gods: nor are they merely apprehended to be such by the mind, but are clearly seen by the eyes of men. Again, from the circle of the moon to the region of the clouds and winds, are aërial souls. These, on the other hand, do not appear to the eye, but are understood by the mind, and are known by the name of heroes, lares, and genii.

Deum se arbitrari esse animam mundi, quem Græci vocant κόσμον, et hunc ipsum mundum esse Deum. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 6. Consult this whole chapter for the particulars stated in the text.

With a deity thus defined, and a mundane system thus explained, Varro endeavours to reconcile the civil worship of images. Its principle, therefore, was pronounced to be entirely physical. The vulgar knew nothing of it; and in their supplications to the gods, it is probable that they thought only of the statues immediately before their eyes. But those, to whom the secret reasons of the Pagan worship were familiar, well knew the connection between the outward image and the inward principle. The true doctrine therefore was, that while the eye of the worshipper was fixed on the statue, his mind thought of the soul of the world and its parts; and in this manner were the gods made present to his understanding.* And this he states to have been the real meaning of the first

* Eas interpretationes sic Varro commendat, ut dicat antiquos simulachra Deorum, et insignia, ornatúsque confinxisse; quæ cùm oculis animadvertissent hi, qui adissent doctrinæ mysteria, possent animam mundi ac partes ejus, id est, Deos veros animo videre. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 5. The Egyptian philosophy, if the far-famed Hermes is to be the expounder of it, brought the gods nearer to the worshipper. When the statue was made, it seems that a god immediately came into it by invitation, and dwelt there! Augustin gives some extracts from a professed work of Hermes, of which a Latin translation was current in the fifth century. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 23, 24, 26.

inventors of statues. They knew that the rational soul of man comes nearer than any other thing to the nature of an immortal intelligence, or the soul of the world. But it is not visible. Wishing therefore to communicate a fixed impression of it, they deemed it proper to represent the outward figure of man. This comprehends the soul: and thus, the one part, however different in its nature, becomes a sensible indication of the other. This reasoning extends to the gods. The soul of the world, into which all the deities are to be resolved, is equally invisible with the soul of man. But it already appears, that an human statue is the indication of an interior human soul. It also appears that the human soul has the nearest resemblance to the soul of the world, or God. Hence it follows, that the worship of statues, though of human shape, is ultimately intended for the Deity; and the mind of the votary is carried by these intermediate stages to the proper object of adoration. He illustrates this reasoning by a supposition. If the nature, or function, of each god is to be indicated by a selection of some outward token, what, for the sake of example, would be required by Bacchus? A flaggon placed upon his altar. This is the

symbolic representation of wine; for the thing containing has a comprehensive meaning, and signifies also the thing contained.* And, on the same principle, does the establishment of images point out the true theology, by ascending to the soul of the world, through the body and soul of man.

Lest this inference should be doubted, he proceeds to fortify the grounds on which he had placed it. The worship of images was declared to be reasonable, on account of the similitude of the soul of man to the soul of the world. He points out, therefore, in a particular manner, the correspondence of the human body with the material world, and of the human soul with the soul of the universe.

There are three degrees of soul which extend through all nature, and which are to be discerned by their respective operations.† In man,

* Tanquam si vasa ponerentur causâ notandorum Deorum, et in Liberi ædem œnophorum sisteretur, quod et significaret vinum, per id quod continet, id quod continetur; ita per simulachrum, quod formam habet humanam, significari animam rationalem, quod eo velut vase natura ista soleat contineri, cujus naturæ Deum volunt esse, vel Deos. Hæc sunt mysteria doctrinæ, in quæ iste vir doctissimus penetraverat, unde in lucem ista proferret. Civ. Dei, ib. vii. c. 5.

† Varro in eodem libro de Diis selectis, tres esse affirmat

the lowest degree of it prevails throughout his body, and has only a vegetative power. This shews itself in the formation and growth of the bones, nails, and hair. The parts of the world, correspondent with these, are trees, stones, and those productions of the earth, which have an insensible growth, and may be said to live, in a mode peculiar to themselves. The second degree of the soul of man rises to the formation of sense, and terminates in the powers of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. To this again answers the æther, in which region of the world Varro supposes its sense to dwell. The third and highest degree of the human soul is its intellectual part. This is denominated the genius of man; and by the possession of this he is distinguished from all other animals. With this too corresponds the highest degree of the soul of the world, which is called God. Shooting through the æther, it reaches the stars, and stamps them gods. Pervading the earth, it forms the goddess Tellus; and penetrating the ocean, it produces the divinity of Neptune!*

animæ gradus in omni universâque naturâ. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 23. See the whole chapter for the particulars stated in the text.

* Tertiam porro, quam et animam ejus nuncupat, quæ scilicet

Thus fanciful and slender was the proof of the internal principle on which idolatry was said to be founded; thus remote and unimpressive was the interpretation which the best natural wisdom gave to the establishments of natural religion! It is needless to dwell upon the impiety and the self-contradiction which prevail in the system that has just been reviewed. We see, that, for the sake of a favourite principle, the soul of man is finally identified with Jupiter, or the soul of the world. Both are therefore to be worshipped, or neither; man is God, or Jupiter is man! The same gods too are once more produced by the very philosophy which was employed to disprove their existence. The fabulous theology was first reprobated by Varro himself; and the civil, which was equally reprobated by Seneca, was afterwards proved to be the same with the fabulous. But we now see, that the natural theology, whose real object it was to supersede them both, brings us round to them again! No more, therefore, shall be said of the particular tenets or pretensions of

pervenit in astra: eam quoque asserit facere Deos; et per eam quando in terram permanat, Deam Tellurem; quod autem inde permeat in mare, atque oceanum, Deum esse Neptunum. Civ. Dei, lib. vii. c. 23.

this theology. But from the subject, thus represented, a few general inferences may be instructively drawn.

1. In its religious institutions, Paganism looked to no object beyond political convenience. On this ground alone, Varro supported the civil theology of his country; and, in the division of his work, professedly treated of Rome before its gods, the latter having derived all their worship from the will of the former.* Revelation is independent of the establishments of men. Through the Divine blessing indeed, it is eminently applicable to the civil condition of the world; and those nations are the happiest which admit most of its influence into the direction of their policy. Our own country exhibits a glorious example of true religion allied with the state, and of the benefits result-

* Varronis igitur confitentis ideò se priùs de rebus humanis scripsisse, posteà de divinis, quia divinæ istæ ab hominibus institutæ sunt, hæc ratio est:—sic ut prior est, inquit, pictor, quàm tabula picta; prior faber, quam ædificium; ita priores sunt civitates, quàm ea quæ à civitatibus sunt instituta. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 4. He says indeed, that if he were to write of the entire nature of the gods, he would place the gods first. But we have seen enough of his sentiments to be persuaded, that this was only a convenient shelter from the imputation of disrespect to the gods, or a secret preference of his own natural theology to the civil.

ing to both; the state hallowed by religion, religion defended by the state. But whatever be the views of human governments, whether they admit or refuse a connection with it, the Gospel maintains its own character. The everlasting word of God is not altered by any authority of man; and "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."*

2. The only theology, to which Varro gave a genuine approbation, he confined to the philosophical part of his countrymen. Hence it is evident, that he had discovered in it nothing which tended to the common benefit of the world, nothing which ultimately affected the soul of man. It might amuse curiosity, but did not lead to happiness. How different the religion of Christ! "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."† The common interest is proved by the necessity of a common knowledge. Every soul is the object of God's gracious call; and it is the characteristic of Christianity, not that it addresses only "the wise man after the flesh;" not that it is confined to the "mighty," or the "noble;"‡ but that "the poor have the Gospel preached to them."§

* Hebrews, xiii. 8. † St. Mark, xvi. 15.
‡ 1 Cor. i. 26. § St. Matthew, xi. 5.

3. From the manner in which Varro treats his subject, it is evident that he regarded the gods with no vulgar eye. He did not worship them, as others did, for the sake of the temporal benefits which they were popularly supposed to confer. Yet it is observable, that neither does he look forward to future blessings from their hands. In his whole discussion, mention is no where made of eternal life!* What may we infer from this? That those Romans who professed the hope of future happiness from their gods, spoke from no settled conviction, but from the obvious disappointment of present expectations. Varro, the great master of Roman theology, had held out no promise to the soul, had made no discovery of eternity; nor can he be supposed to have entertained a hope, of which he gives "no sign." Here then is the great triumph of the Gospel. Its characteristic is the promise of the life "which is to come," of eternal happiness through faith in Christ, and obedience to his commands. "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am,

* In hâc totâ serie pulcherrimæ ac subtilissimæ distributionis, et distinctionis, vitam æternam frustra quæri et sperari, facillimè apparet. Civ. Dei, lib. vi. c. 3.

ye may be also."* And he who gave this promise to the world, shall appear once again for the consummation of it. "The Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him. He shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate the one from the other. The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."†

* St. John, xiv. 2, 3. † St. Matthew, xxv. 46.

CHAPTER VI.

PLATO SUPPOSED TO TEACH HIGHER DOCTRINES THAN OTHER PAGANS...INDISCREET ADMIRATION OF HIM... SCHOOL OF ALEXANDRIA...HIS DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE DEITY...SECONDARY GODS...DEMONS...FROM NONE OF THESE COULD ETERNAL LIFE BE DERIVED.

THE system which has just been reviewed, had obtained the admiration of many of the more learned and philosophical Pagans. Ashamed of the grossness of the common worship of the gods, they gladly accepted so creditable an interpretation of it. Varro was therefore supposed to have made a discovery of the hidden and substantial wisdom which originally belonged to the establishment of the popular idolatry. But the refutation of this branch of Heathen theology, was the smallest part of the labour of Augustin. The spiritual wants of his age called for an higher effort against the extraordinary influence of the name of Plato. We find, indeed, that impressions, of a peculiar kind, had been made on the Christian world by the opinions attributed to this eminent man. From the incidental notice already taken of him,

it appears that he adopted and improved with superior eloquence, some of the higher doctrines of the school of Pythagoras, which had been delivered by Timæus.* He seems not to have been satisfied with the spontaneous formation, the self-derived perfection, or durability ascribed by some philosophers to the universe. He was therefore supposed to have arrived at the knowledge of the Divine Being, and to have made the great discoveries of Creation and the Unity. From other of his speculations were also derived the hopes of an Immortality to the soul. On account of the credit which he had acquired on these important questions, his philosophy was supposed to be particularly formidable to the Gospel.† Some flattered themselves that, in Plato, they possessed all the instruction which was essential to the duty and the welfare of man. They therefore deemed all farther religious communication to be useless at the least, if not presumptuous and on this account

* See page 181.

† We see the extraordinary anxiety of Augustin on this account.—Nunc intentiore opus est animo multò quàm erat in superiorum solutione quæstionum, et explicatione librorum. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 1. But it will soon appear, that his alarm was unfounded, and that he drew his information less from Plato himself than from the later Platonic school.

rejected the faith of Christ. Some, who professed the faith, and saw with regret the alienation from it which was produced by the influence of an admired philosophy, betrayed their weakness in accommodating the Scripture to the doctrines of Plato, and sought to win the Pagans, by the discovery of a resemblance which did not exist: nor is Augustin himself wholly free from this charge. Others, again, took a malicious advantage of these concessions, attacked the Gospel with the weapons furnished by its injudicious friends, and exalted the religion of nature at the expense of Revelation. Some inquiry into the doctrine of Plato was therefore requisite, not only on account of its own character and pretensions, but of its effects on Christianity;* and it was of particular importance to prove, that, though superior to the system of Varro, it was yet far removed from the sublimity of the Gospel; that in no mode of classical theology, however celebrated, was contained the true happiness of man; and that Revelation alone could teach the proper know-

* Mirantur quidam, nobis in Christi gratiâ sociati, cùm audiunt, vel legunt, Platonem de Deo ista sensisse, quæ *multùm congruere veritati religionis nostræ agnoscunt.* Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 11.

ledge of God, and effectually promise the rewards of the "life which is to come."

It will assist us in understanding the nature of the claims which have been made in favour of Plato, if we refer to some of the previous systems of philosophy.

In an early age, wisdom was taught in a simple manner, and without contention. The name itself of philosophy was as yet unknown, or not commonly adopted; and those, whose minds were stored with reflections which might be beneficial to the rest of mankind, uttered them in brief and impressive sentences. And hence came those moral and prudential maxims, some of which are still appended to the names of the "Wise-men."* At length arose two schools, which soon obtained a very high celebrity, and produced that talent for philosophical disquisition and dispute, by which Greece was afterwards distinguished. Their founders were Thales and Pythagoras. The name of the former occurs indeed among those of the Wise-men; but not content with this mode of

* Cùm antea Sapientes appellarentur, qui modo quodam laudabilis vitæ aliis præstare videbantur, iste (Pythagoras) interrogatus quid profiteretur, philosophum se esse respondit. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 2.

instruction, he became the parent of the Ionic school.* He seems to have been the first who directed his inquiries into the properties of nature, and the origin and laws of the universe. This soon became a fashionable study, and was indulged in that school with much prejudice to its theology. Thales, either omitting the agency of a deity, or depriving him of his fundamental privilege of creation,† pronounced, that from one of the elements alone, proceeded the matter employed in the formation of the other parts

* Ionici verò generis princeps fuit Thales Milesius, unus illorum septem, qui appellati sunt Sapientes. Sed illi sex vitæ genere distinguebantur, et quibusdam præceptis ad bene vivendum accommodatis. Iste autem Thales, ut successores etiam propagaret, rerum naturam scrutatus, suásque disputationes literis mandans, eminuit; maximèque admirabilis extitit, quòd, astrologiæ numeris comprehensis, defectus solis et lunæ etiam prædicere potuit. ib.

† Cicero does not rescue him from this charge, notwithstanding the introduction of a divine mind.—Thales Milesius, (it is Velleius who speaks,) qui primus de talibus rebus quæsivit, aquam dixit esse initium rerum; Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aquâ cuncta *gigneret*. Nat. Deorum, lib. i.—Cicero is accurate in his representation of this philosophy. The creation of Thales is nothing more than a generation from eternal matter. Augustin, however, understands the *principle* of water in a strict sense, and supposes that no deity was employed by Thales.

of the world. One of his successors, fearing, that from this restriction to a single element, a scarcity of effect might ensue, extended to other things that power which Thales had confined to water. He therefore ascribed the multiplicity of mundane objects to an infinity of principle productive of each of them respectively.*

Another was dissatisfied with an unnecessary variety of original subjects, and recurred once more to a single element: but making a different choice, he was positive in his preference of air,† which afforded a more philosophical origin of the universe than water. Content with this discovery, he abandoned also the agency of the gods; and thought that, if it were necessary to affirm any thing concerning them, they were only secondary to air, and produced from that infinite cause. Indeed, from Thales to Archelaus it is impossible to discover the proper doctrine of God or creation. In the hands of

* Anaximander, non ex unâ re, sicut Thales ex humore, sed ex suis propriis principiis quasque res nasci putavit. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 2.

† Anaximenem discipulum et successorem reliquit, qui omnes rerum causas infinito aëri dedit: nec Deos negavit, aut tacuit,—non tamen ab ipsis aërem factum, sed ipsos ex aëre ortos credidit. ib.

these teachers, the Deity lost sometimes his own existence, and always his distinctive right of creative power;* and the leading propensity of the Ionic school was, to dispute concerning the comparative antiquity of the elements; to inquire, which of them afforded the most convenient primary matter; and from what subject might begin, with the greatest philosophical propriety, the extraction and formation of other things.

Pythagoras had travelled into Italy, and taught in a part of it, which, from the extent of the Grecian settlements, obtained the name of Magna Græcia.† He was therefore the founder of the Italian school. From a few fragments of its writings which are yet preserved, we see, that this school was of a moral and contempla-

* Anaxagoras himself supposes matter to have been co-existent with the Divine intelligence:—Πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμοῦ· εἶτα νοῦς ἐλθὼν ἀυτὰ διεκόσμησεν. Diog. Laert. in Anaxag.

† Italicum genus,—ex eâ parte Italiæ, quæ quondam Magna Græcia nuncupata est,—autorem habuit Pythagoram Samium. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 2.—Pliny is inclined to attribute the name of Magna Græcia, not to the extent of their settlements, but to the imposing vanity of the Greeks. He calls them, justly enough, genus in suam gloriam effusissimum;—and affirms, whether justly or not, that their colonies did not occupy more than a thousandth part of Italy.

tive cast. To the former part of its character is certainly to be referred the doctrine of transmigration,* which was afterwards adopted by Plato: to the latter perhaps, its preparation for those inquiries into natural truth, and the causes of things by which it was eminently distinguished. But it is difficult at this time to determine, which was its most approved mode of considering the mundane philosophy. Of the two principal treatises which remain, and which, in the opinion of Gale, are drawn from

* This is expressly stated in the latter part of the curious treatise of the Soul of the World. The scale of transmigration is adapted to the conduct of men;—cowards are turned into women, murderers into wild beasts, and voluptuaries into swine; the rash and giddy into birds; and the idle, the unlearned, and the stupid, into aquatic creatures, as if they were unworthy to breathe the common air. Τῶν μὲν δειλῶν, ἐς γυναικέα σκάνεα, ποθ' ὕβριν εκδιδόμενα· τῶν δὲ μιαιφόνων, ἐς θηρίων σώματα ποτὶ κόλασιν· λάγνων δ' ἐς συῶν ἢ κάπρων μορφάς· κούφων δὲ καὶ μετεώρων, ἐς πτηνῶν ἀέροπόρων· ἀργῶν δὲ καὶ ἀπράκτων, ἀμαθῶν τε καὶ ἀνοήτων, ἐς τὰν τῶν ἐνύδρων ἰδεάν. p. 566. The other characteristic of the school of Pythagoras is prettily expressed by Ovid:—

Cùmque animo, et vigili perspexerat omnia curâ,
In medium discenda dabat; cœtúmque silentûm
Dictáque mirantûm, magni primordia mundi,
Et rerum causas, et quid natura docebat.

Met. lib. xv.

the most sacred recesses of the Pythagorean school, one constructs the world from pre-existing matter, employs a deity in its arrangement, and places within it a soul necessary for its animation and direction. And this is the doctrine of Timæus the Locrian. The other treatise excludes all interference of a God, and pronounces the world to be its own master. It was neither created, nor arranged from a Chaos. It had no origin, and shall have no end. It is self-existent, and necessarily eternal, and indestructible. And this is the system of Ocellus Lucanus.* He talks indeed, as Archytas, Euryphamus, and other Pythagoreans do, of "a God," and "the Gods;" and he ventures to assign a limit, within which reside the natures which are immortal. The region of the moon is the dividing isthmus: above it are the

* Δοκεῖ γὰρ μοι τὸ πᾶν ἀνώλεθρον εἶναι καὶ ἀγένητον· ἀεὶ τε γὰρ ἦν, καὶ ἔσται. C. 1. Opusc. Mythol. Ed. Gale. The indestructibility of the universe is afterwards attempted to be proved. If its dissolution takes place, it must be either into being, or non-being. If into being, it will still continue to be. If into non-being, an absurdity is affirmed; for, as the world could not at first be produced from nothing, (according to the received laws of philosophy,) neither can it become nothing, after having been something. The conclusion is therefore drawn—ἄφθαρτον ἄρα καὶ ἀνώλεθρον τὸ πᾶν.

gods, while the space beneath is given up to contention and nature, to alternate generation and decay.* But the gods, thus supposed, are merely free from the dissolution which is the portion of man. They are only a physical, though a superior, portion of the universe. They have no absolute and disposing power, but are themselves immortal, on the same principle which makes the world eternal.

These were the principal authorities of philosophy till the time of Socrates.

This extraordinary man had been bred in the Ionic school, and was the immediate disciple of Archelaus. But the dissensions into which the followers of Thales had fallen, and the unsatisfactory nature of the inquiries in which they were commonly engaged, seem to have given early offence to his discerning mind; and in the Phædo he is made to account for his disgust, in a very lively and natural manner.† He had a characteristic fondness for the

* Ἰσθμὸς γὰρ ἐστιν ἀθανασίας καὶ γενέσεως ὁ περὶ τὴν σελήνην δρόμος· τὸ μὲν ἄνωθεν ὑπὲρ ταύτης πᾶν, καὶ τὸ επ' αὐτὴν, θῶν κατέχει γένος· τὸ δ' ὑποκάτω σελήνης, νείκους καὶ φύσεως· τὸ μὲν (γὰρ) ἐστιν ἐν αὐτῇ διαλλαγὴ γεγονότων, τὸ δὲ γένεσις ἀπογεγονότων. ib. c. 2.

† Ἐγὼ γὰρ, ὦ Κέβης, νέος ὢν θαυμαστῶς ὡς ἐπεθύμησα

discovery of truth: and his object was supposed to be attainable only through an application to the reigning philosophy; and this was termed the history of nature. He applied himself therefore, with great zeal, to the speculations then prevalent; whether putrescence, consequent to the action of heat and cold, were capable of producing animals;—where was the seat, and what the cause, of intelligence in man:—whether it were the blood or the brain, whether it were fire or air: and other such questions. But in these pursuits he became bewildered and confounded. At length, however, he flattered himself that he should find a resting-place for his thoughts. Anaxagoras was one of the sublimest masters of the Ionic school; and some person had read to Socrates, out of a book of his philosophy, the sentence

ταύτης τῆς σοφίας ἣν δὴ καλοῦσι περὶ φύσεως ἱστορίαν. ὑπερήφανον γὰρ μοι ἐδόκει εἶναι εἰδέναι τὰς αἰτίας ἑκάστου, διὰ τί γίγνεται ἕκαστον, καὶ διὰ τί ἀπολλυται, καὶ διὰ τί ἐστι· καὶ πολλάκις ἐμαυτὸν ἄνω καὶ κάτω μετέβαλλον, σκοπῶν πρῶτον τὰ τοιάδε, Ἆρ' ἐπειδὰν τὸ θερμὸν καὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν σηπεδόνα τινὰ λάβῃ, ὥς τινες ἔλεγον, τότε δὴ τὰ ζῶα συντρέφεται; καὶ πότερον τὸ αἷμα ἐστίν ᾧ φρονοῦμεν, ἢ ὁ ἀὴρ, ἢ τὸ πῦρ· &c. Phædon. p. 71. Ed. Fic.—Part of this passage seems to refer to the physics of Parmenides, who supposed the human race to have originally sprung from heat and cold acting upon mud.

which contained a summary of his doctrine; "There is an intelligence which is the cause of all things, and bestows on them their order and beauty."* Now then he expected to discover what had so long escaped him, the reasons on which was founded the actual constitution of things: and truth being thus ascertained, the detection of error would necessarily follow. He was now about to know with certainty, whether the earth were flat or round; and either of these figures being determined, the reason was also to appear, why one of them was preferred to the other. The same instruction he expected concerning the sun, moon, and stars; the reason of their velocities and returns, and all other affections incident to their course. With great satisfaction therefore he procured the book, and with great eagerness applied himself to the perusal of it. But notwithstanding the lofty pretensions of Anaxagoras, poor Socrates remained in the same ignorance as before; and instead of being introduced to the intelligence which was promised, he found that air, and æther, and water were still assumed as the causes of things, and that absur—

* Ὡς ἄρα νοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ διακοσμῶν τε καὶ πάντων αἴτιος. ib. p. 72.

dities and improbabilities were made to stand for genuine and primary truths.* This, says he, "is just as if a person, undertaking to state the reason why I sit here, should expatiate on the nature of my bones, and nerves, and flesh, and skin, and prove their aptitude to produce a sitting posture; and meanwhile, wholly omit the real and primary causes, namely, the will of the Athenians, which consigns me to this prison, and my determination to sit in it till I swallow the poison, which they are preparing for me."† These probably were the circumstances which impelled Socrates, at a mature period of life, to use the language so emphatically attributed to him by Xenophon, who informs us, that he dissuaded his hearers from any farther attention to geometry, astrology, or astronomy, than might suffice for the common

* Ἀπὸ δὴ θαυμαστῆς ἐλπίδος ᾠχόμην φερόμενος, ἐπειδὰν προϊὼν καὶ ἀναγινώσκων, ὁρῶ ἄνδρα τῷ μὲν νῷ οὐδὲν χρώμενον, οὐδὲ τίνας αἰτίας ἐπαιτιώμενον εἰς τὸ διακοσμεῖν τὰ πράγματα, ἀέρας δὲ καὶ αἰθέρας καὶ ὕδατα αἰτιώμενον, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ καὶ ἄτοπα. ib. p. 73.

† Ἀμελήσας τὰς ὡς ἀληθῶς αἰτίας λέγειν, ὅτι ἐπειδὰν Ἀθηναίοις ἔδοξε βέλτιον εἶναι ἐμοῦ καταψηφίσασθαι, διὰ ταῦτα δὴ καὶ ἐμοὶ βέλτιον αὖ δέδοκται ἐνθάδε καθῆσθαι, καὶ δικαιότερον παραμένοντα ὑπέχειν τὴν δίκην ἣν ἂν κελεύσωσιν. ib.

purposes of human life.* His youthful ardour for remote or abstruse inquiries concerning natural causes, was now abated by experience; and he particularly forbade the indulgence of those speculations which vainly affected to discover the secrets of the heavens, and the manner in which the Deity contrives the order of things.† Such pursuits are unacceptable to the gods; nor, whatever may be the pretensions belonging to them, are they within the limits of human knowledge. He adds the danger of derangement to the mind which should persist in them; and here again occurs the mention of Anaxagoras, who seems to have grown mad with pride, on his fancied discovery of the mechanism employed in the construction of the world by the wisdom of the gods!

This is sufficient perhaps to account for the

* Τὸ δὲ μέχρι τῶν δυσξυνέτων διαγραμμάτων γεωμετρίαν μανθάνειν ἀπεδοκίμαζεν· ὅ,τι μὲν γὰρ ὠφελοίη ταῦτα, ὐκ ἔφη ὁρᾷν. Mem. lib. iv. c. 7.

† Ὅλως δὲ τῶν ὑρανίων, ᾗ ἕκαστα ὁ Θεὸς μηχανᾶται φροντιστὴν γίγνεσθαι, ἀπέτρεπεν· ὅτε γὰρ ἐυρετὰ ἀνθρώποις ἀυτὰ ἐνόμιζεν εἶναι, ὅτε χαρίζεσθαι θεοῖς ἂν ἡγεῖτο τὸν ζητοῦντα, ἃ ἐκεῖνοι σαφηνὶσαι ὐκ ἐβυλήθησαν· κινδυνεῦσαι δ' ἄν ἔφη καὶ παραφρονῆσαι τὸν ταῦτα μεριμνῶντα, ὐδὲν ἧττον ἢ Ἀναξαγόρας παρεφρόνησεν, ὁ μέγιστον φρονήσας ἐπὶ τῷ τὰς θεῶν μηχανὰς ἐξηγεῖσθαι. ib.

disgust of Socrates, without recurring to the benevolent supposition quoted for him by Augustin;* that he deemed the mind unfit for the exercise of philosophy, unless it were previously purged from the disabling influence of the passions. In short, the object of this sagacious man seems to have been, to restore to the profession of human wisdom that simplicity which had attended it before the agitation of the elemental questions by Thales; and to confine it as much as possible to the purposes of prudence and morality.

Plato was the scholar of Socrates:† but, not content with the doctrines of one school, nor

* Non mihi autem videtur posse ad liquidum colligi, utrum Socrates, ut hoc faceret, tædio rerum obscurarum et incertarum ad aliquid apertum et certum reperiendum animum intenderit; an verò, sicut de illo quidam benevolentiùs suspicantur, nolebat immundos terrenis cupiditatibus animos se extendere in divina conari. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 3.

† Socrates hujus (Archelai) discipulus fuisse perhibetur, magister Platonis. ib. c. 2. Laertius adds a dream of Socrates. He held a cygnet in his lap, which suddenly flew away into the air, full-fledged, and singing melodious strains. This was interpreted the next day, when Plato was presented to him:— *τὸν δὲ τοῦτον εἰπεῖν εἶναι τὸν ὄρνιν.* in vit. Plat. I know not if it is worth remarking, that swans are mentioned by Plato with unusual reverence: perhaps he meant to give credit to the notion that Apollo was his father.

governed by the sole authority of the master whom yet he singularly loved, he sought wisdom wherever it might be found. From Athens therefore, before he had reached his thirtieth year, he repaired to Megara, with some other scholars of Socrates, and heard the dialectics of Euclid. Hence he passed to Cyrene, and conversed, as Laertius informs us, with Theodorus the mathematician. Afterwards, he proceeded to Italy, where the Pythagorean doctrines were taught by Philolaus and Eurytus; and finally, to Egypt,* a country which had been in much repute with the more learned Greeks, on account of the recondite wisdom supposed to be possessed by its priests. From these and other sources he drew the knowledge of former ages, and added it to that of his own. He selected from every school the tenets by which it was most distinguished, and improved, or incorporated them with the doctrines taught by himself. He provided a stability for the natural philosophy of Heraclitus, by communicating

* Ἔπειτα γενόμενος ὀκτὼ καὶ εἴκοσιν ἐτῶν, εἰς Μέγαρα πρὸς Εὐκλείδην σὺν καὶ ἄλλοις τισὶ Σωκρατικοῖς ὑπεχώρησιν· ἔπειτα εἰς Κυρήνην ἀπῆλθε πρὸς Θεόδωρον τὸν μαθεματικὸν· κἀκεῖθεν εἰς Ἰταλιάν πρὸς τὸς Πυθαγορικὸς, Φιλόλαον καὶ Εὔρυτον· ἔνθεν τε εἰς Αἴγυπτον παρὰ τὸς Προφήτας. ib.

the substratum of an original and immutable essence to things which, in their own nature, were flux and perishable.* He adopted and enlarged the intellectual system of Pythagoras; and with the active morality of Socrates he combined the mysticism of his Egyptian teachers at Heliopolis. And hence the copiousness and variety, the compound nature, the lofty obscurity, and not unfrequent self-contradiction which are to be observed in his writings.†

The philosophy of Plato was anciently divided into three parts, dialectics, ethics, and physics. The latter of these however was subdivided into two—the study of corporeal and incorporeal nature. Metaphysics therefore were considered as a branch of physics.‡ In this

* Cùm enim ex Heracliti systemate recepisset, omnia fluere, nec per se constare eadem posse, visum illi, necessariò addenda esse subjecta æterna, per se subsistentia, quæ immutabilem rebus fluxis essentiam largirentur. Brucker de Phil. Græc. lib. ii. c. 6.

† Not so Apuleius.—Quamvis de diversis officinis hæc ei essent philosophiæ membra suscepta, naturalis ab Heracliteis, intellectualis à Pythagoreis, rationalis atque moralis ex ipso Socratis fonte, unum tamen ex omnibus, et quasi proprii partûs corpus effecit. De Philos. Natur.—But with the zealous Apuleius, Plato is infallible.

‡ Εἰς τρία διελόντος μέρη τȣ̃ Πλάτωνος τὸν πάντα τῆς φιλο-

manner the subject was distributed by some of the chief Christian writers, Eusebius and Augustin; as well as by some of the professed followers of Plato; Apuleius, who gives an account of his philosophy under these divisions; and Atticus, whom Eusebius calls one of the more illustrious of the Platonic school.*

The dialectics are extolled by Augustin, as superior to those of the other philosophers whom the Romans had received as their teachers. Epicurus is supposed to have borrowed part of his doctrine from the early school of Democritus. His well-known tenet, that the senses were the proper test of truth, appeared to many of the Pagans themselves to stop the

σοφίας λόγον, εἰς φυσικὸν, ἠθικὸν, λογικὸν· εἶτ' αὖ πάλιν, τὸν φυσικὸν διελομένῳ εἴς τε τὴν τῶν αἰσθητῶν θεωρίαν, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀσωμάτων κατανόησιν· εὕροις ἂν καὶ παρ' Ἑβραίοις τὸ τριμερὲς τοῦτο τῆς διδασκαλίας εἶδος. Præp. Evang. lib. 11. c. 1. Compare Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 4.—Eusebius pursues his argument with an injudiciousness which was promoted by the circumstances of the age; and is anxious to bring as good logic, and natural philosophy from Moses, as the later Platonic school could boast in their master!

* Quoniam tres partes philosophiæ congruere inter se primus obtinuit, nos quoque separatim de singulis dicemus. Apul. de Philos. Natur.—Atticus is called διαφανὴς ἀνὴρ τῶν Πλατωνικῶν φιλοσόφων. Præp. Evang. lib. 11. ib.

progress of all science and sound reasoning.* The early fathers of the church were also loud in condemning it as hostile to religion and its proofs. Nor were the Stoics without their share of reprobation on the same account. Attached as they were to the exercise of the mind in disputation, they maintained the priority of importance due to the experience of the senses, and referred all reasoning to the primary and inchoate intelligences which these afforded. Plato is complimented by Augustin for his freedom from such errors. He did not deny to the senses that influence which was obviously due to them; but he bestowed his chief attention on the mind, to the exercise of which he attributed the proper criterion of truth.† This

* Quod autem attinet ad doctrinam, ubi altera pars versatur, quæ ab eis Logica, id est, rationalis vocatur; absit ut his comparandi videantur, qui posuerunt judicium virtutis in sensibus corporis, eorúmque infidis et fallacibus regulis omnia quæ discuntur, metienda esse censuerunt, ut Epicurei, et quicunque alii tales,—ut etiam ipsi Stoici. Qui cùm vehementèr amaverint solertiam disputandi, quam Dialecticam nominant, à corporis sensibus eam ducendam putârunt. Hinc asseverantes animum concipere notiones, quos appellant εννοιας, hinc propagari atque connecti totam discendi docendíque rationem. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 7.

† Hi autem, quos meritò cæteris anteponimus, discreverunt ea quæ mente conspiciuntur ab iis quæ sensibus attinguntur:

commendation however must not be received without a considerable abatement. It is obvious to every reader of Plato, that he indulges an inordinate taste for abstraction; and it is impossible not to notice, what Brucker has justly pointed out,—his strong tendency to fanaticism.*

The ethics of Plato have received much praise for the loftiness of their principle as well as for the extent of their application. While the rule of private conduct was learnt from the Philebus, Euthyphro, and other dialogues; that of public morals was held out to civil communities in the larger treatises of laws, and of a republic. Hereafter, it may not be uninstructive or unamusing to lay before you the various opinions concerning the summum bonum (the proper end of ethics) which pre-

nec sensibus adimentes quod possunt, nec iis dantes ultrà quàm possunt. ib. The view which Apuleius gives of this branch of the triple philosophy, proceeds in a technical manner. It does not point out the general principles of reasoning, or inquire from whence they arise, but is almost entirely concerned about the forms of syllogisms.

* Quod unum dogma (the abstraction of the mind for the purpose of contemplating intelligible things, or ideas) satis prodit, quàm fanatica sit Platonis philosophia, et quòd tota enthusiasmo faveat. De Philos. Plat. c. 15.

vailed in the Pagan schools at large. This will furnish a discussion decisive of the general question concerning the pursuit of happiness by the men of nature. At present, it will be sufficient to observe, that, while some placed their chief good in the body, some in the mind, and some in both, or in the outward advantages of life added to these, nothing seemed to be considered beyond man in the present world, and the manner in which he might be benefited by the objects which surrounded him. To Plato however is attributed by Augustin the merit of going farther, and of providing a certain happiness for the mind in the contemplation of the Deity.* But here again is a caution to be applied. Mosheim has well observed the pruriency of Plato's disposition, and the want of chastity and modesty which he so often betrays.† On the point immediately under our notice, it is impossible not to remark, how ex-

* Cedant igitur hi omnes illis philosophis, qui non dixerunt beatum esse hominem fruentem corpore, vel fruentem animo, sed fruentem Deo. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 8.

† Plato, qui naturâ non nimis bene constitutus videtur fuisse, parûmque castus et pudicus, quo ipse minori laboraret invidiâ, Socratem ignominiæ suæ participem esse voluit. Dissert. Eccles. vol. i. p. 198.

ceptionable are some of the means which, under the cover of the name of Socrates, he prescribes for the attainment of his object. The Deity is the καλον in the highest degree; and one mode of exciting our affections towards divine beauty, is to attach ourselves to those resemblances of it which are to be discovered in the most perfect of human forms!* But I will add no more.

Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile ———

This introduction of the Deity, however degrading to his nature, brings us to the theology of Plato, which is a part of the physics, and with which indeed we are principally concerned. This then is the manner in which the mind of Plato is supposed to have ascended towards the discovery of the Deity.

NATURE consists of things animate and inanimate. But life is superior to matter; for corporeal species are the objects of the senses, while vital species are to be discovered only by the eye of the mind.† Hence it follows, that

* In the Phædrus is the dangerous and revolting doctrine here noticed.

† Consideraverunt enim quicquid est, vel corpus esse, vel vitam, meliúsque aliquid vitam esse quàm corpus; speciémque corporis esse sensibilem, intelligibilem vitæ. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 6.

intelligible are preferable to sensible species. And this preference is established through the power which the mind possesses of judging concerning the beauty and qualities of body. For whether the body indulge repose, or exert itself in action, the mind maintains its superior privilege, and performs its various offices, without being constrained by time or place, or any of those exterior circumstances by which bodily operations are affected. The beauty of the mind is therefore of a higher order than that of the body; and thus is the one distinguished from the other. But the mind, thus evidently superior to body, must next be compared with itself. The same judgment concerning sensible species will not equally result from every mind.* The mind of one man will determine better than that of another, in proportion to the differences of their natural sagacity, or their habits of exertion. Nay, the mind of the same man will determine better or worse concerning the same objects, as attention or improvement may affect its judgments. But hence a mutability ensues. The mind seems

* Sed ibi quoque nisi mutabilis esset, non alius alio meliùs de specie sensibili judicaret; et idem ipse unus cùm proficit, meliùs utique postea quàm priùs. ib.

to partake of some of the imperfections of body, in the alterations of which it is susceptible. That sensible species may lose their characteristic qualities, and finally disappear, is certain. But, if the mind is subject to change, and capable of increase, it is also liable to diminution; and if so, it may be finally lost. And hence it follows, that in searching for the primary species of things; or that from which the species of other things are derived, it is necessary to ascend not only beyond the properties of body, but beyond the mind of man.* The first conclusion therefore concerning the Deity was, that the mind being preferable to body, he was of the superior species, and consequently, was not to be looked for in body. The next conclusion was, that the Deity being thus proved to be mind, he must have the additional property of immutability. For the species of things, or those qualities which constitute their respective natures, could not be derived from the perishable things themselves. Nor were they

* Quod autem recipit majus et minus, sine dubitatione mutabile est. Unde ingeniosi et docti et in his exercitati homines facilè colligerunt, non esse in eis rebus primam speciem, ubi mutabile esse convincitur. ib.

derived from the mind of man, itself mutable. It was necessary therefore to refer them to an immutable principle, or the mind of the Deity.* And hence came the universe, its figure, qualities, and movements; the disposition of the elements, and the bodies which are placed at various distances among them. Hence too came every degree of life, whether vegetative alone, or sensitive and rational combined with it, or any other mode of life possessed by beings beyond the condition of man.

From this various superiority of the Deity, another point was inferred,—the comprehensiveness of his nature. He is not to be estimated by the separate properties of animate or inanimate things. In him existence cannot be supposed without life, nor life without intellect, nor intellect without happiness; but life, and intellect, and happiness are together his being;†

* Viderunt quicquid mutabile esset, non esse summum Deum, et ideò omnem animam mutabilésque spiritus transcenderunt quærentes Deum. ib.

† Quia non aliud illi est esse, aliud vivere, quasi possit esse non vivens;—nec aliud illi est vivere, aliud intelligere, quasi possit vivere non intelligens;—nec aliud illi est intelligere, aliud beatum esse, quasi possit intelligere, et non beatus esse: Sed quod est illi vivere, intelligere, et beatum esse, hoc est illi esse. ib.

and he exists truly, because he exists unchangeably.

Such is the substance of the statement given by Augustin concerning the knowledge which Plato was supposed to have of the Deity. But it is certain, that the theology which is so regularly detailed in this Chapter, was drawn, not from Plato himself,* but from some of those who became his zealous commentators after the propagation of the Gospel; or, that Augustin unconsciously applied to certain philosophical terms, that more spiritual meaning which Revelation had imparted, and with which his own pious mind was fully possessed. Indeed, ample proofs of this assertion are afforded in the Chapter itself. The writer refers for his au-

* In the Philebus he talks of the chief good of man. This must be perfect. It is not in pleasure alone, nor in science without the perception of pleasure. Both together are preferable to each singly; but neithes is the true good in this third class. He passes therefore to a fourth, or the Demiurgic cause. In this is true being; and the happiness of man is compounded of the best pleasure, and the best science, which is employed on this being:—περὶ τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ ὄντως, καὶ τὸ κατὰ ταυτὸν ἀεὶ πεφυκὸς, p. 400. Ed. Ficin. From such occasional high fancies, though mixed with much grossness and obscurity, the later Platonics endeavoured to raise a system of divinity which might be successfully opposed to Revelation.

thorities, not to Plato, but to the Platonicians at large, whose conclusions are adopted as if they were those of their master.* Again, when Augustin speaks of that mode of life which is enjoyed by certain beings superior to man, he explains it by the example of the angels.† Their sense and intellect subsist without the necessity of being joined with the lowest degree of life. They are said not to vegetate, and therefore not to require support from nourishment. But Mosheim, in his treatise on the imitation of the Christians by the Pagan writers, has carefully ascertained, that the term αγγελος is used by Plato in its common meaning among the antient Greeks; and that the scriptural sense was artfully communicated to it by the later Platonic school.‡ Again, when Augustin

* Consideraverunt,—viderunt—isti philosophi, quos cæteris non immeritò famâ atque gloriâ prælatos *videmus*. ib.

† Quæ (vita) nutritorio subsidio non indiget, sed tantum continet, sentit, intelligit, qualis est in angelis. ib. Augustin is one of those theologians whose "common gloss" concerning this quality of angels is reproved by Milton. He makes them eat; and "what redounds, transpires with ease." Parad. Lost, Book 5.

‡ Meum si quid valet judicium, putem, nomen αγγελος apud Platonem *ministrum, administrum, distributorem*, significare; quo sensu infinitis in locis scriptorum Græcorum occurrit.

ascends to the deity of Plato, and asserts him to be uncreated, he appears to attribute to him the actual creation of all other things.* But this is a doctrine which was never understood by Paganism; and which, as Brucker has justly observed, no sound interpretation of Plato can possibly allow. However, through these and other causes of misrepresentation, the philosophy of Plato obtained an inordinate credit; and

Quæ cum ita sint, equidem Casauboni et aliorum virorum doctorum sententiam qui à recentioribus demum Græcorum scriptoribus sensu Christiano vocabulum hoc usurpatum esse arbitrantur, anteposuerim opinioni Fabri et Daleni, dum luculentioribus testimoniis aliter sentire cogar. Dissert. Eccles. vol. 1. p. 349.—Dacier, however, talks of angels, as if they were as familiar to the writings of Plato as to the Scriptures. Discourse on Plato.

* Ibi esse rerum principium rectè crediderunt, quod factum non esset, et *ex quo* facta cuncta essent. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 6. The words here marked would more properly mean, that the matter of the world proceeded from the Deity; and in this shocking sense Plato was interpreted by many of his later followers. But Augustin is evidently thinking of the scriptural creation, and attributing to the philosopher that which was not his due. His principles were, as Brucker represents them; —Ex nihilo nihil fieri, (qui enim creationem ex nihilo illi tribuunt, omnino falluntur;) esse itaque duas causas rerum omnium; unam, à quâ sint omnia; alteram, ex quà sint omnia: illam Deum esse, hanc materiam; et hæc quidem principia sibi ab æterno opponi, nec à se dependere. De Philos. Plat. c. 6.

inquiries were anxiously made by the Christians, whence was derived the superior knowledge which it was supposed to contain?*

It was universally allowed, that Plato had travelled to Egypt; and on this fact some error was grafted. As in that celebrated country Moses had triumphantly demonstrated the power of the one true God over the magic of the idolaters, the doctrine of the Unity was supposed to have been preserved in its writings or traditions, and to have been more particularly known to the priests with whom Plato conversed. Hence then, and from actual conversations with Jews resident in Egypt, came, as was imagined, his better sentiments concerning the Deity!†

* Augustin quotes the opinions of some (which however he disproves by argument and chronology) that Plato had read the Jewish scriptures, or in his travels had personally conversed with the Prophet Jeremiah! Quapropter in illâ peregrinatione suâ Plato nec Hiëremiam videre potuit tantò antè defunctum, nec easdem scripturas legere, quæ nondum fuerunt in Græcam linguam translatæ, quâ ille pollebat. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 11.

† One of the suppositions of Eusebius is, that Plato might have learnt the doctrine of Moses from certain Hebrews who fled into Egypt after the second conquest of their country by the Persians:—*συνίσταται παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις τηνικάδε τὰς διατριβὰς πεποιημένος, καθ' ὃν Ἑβραῖοι τῆς οἰκείας δεύτερον ἀποπε-*

This notion appears to have been fondly entertained by the early Christians. It was also zealously promoted by the vanity of the Egyptian Jews, with whom indeed Brucker supposes it to have originated. Many of them became enamoured with the Platonic doctrines which were taught in the celebrated school of Alexandria. But never abandoning their national predilection, and feeling a certain jealousy amidst their admiration, they represented the Unity to have been accidentally known to the Greeks through the medium of their own history, and patriotically resolved the philosophy of Plato into an imitation of Moses!* An opinion thus

σόντες γῆς, Αἰγυπτίοις ἐπεχωρίαζον, Περσῶν επικρατόντων. Præp. Evang. lib. 11. c. 8. Compare lib. x. c. 4. Plato could not have begun his travels till about the year 400. We hear indeed of many Jews in Egypt under the Ptolemies. But this is as much too late for the purpose of Eusebius, as the second captivity is too early. The custom indeed of preserving the records of memorable events in the temples of Egypt, is stated by Plato himself:—ὅσα δὲ ἢ παρ' ἡμῖν, ἠτῇδε, ἢ καὶ κατ' ἄλλον τόπον ὃν ἀκοῇ ἴσμεν, εἴπου τὶ καλὸν ἢ μέγα γέγονεν, ἢ καὶ τινά διαφορὰν ἄλλην ἔχον, πάντα γεγραμμένα ἐκ παλαιοῦ, τῇδ' ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς, καὶ σεσωσμένα. In Tim. p. 1043.—In this manner Plato might have heard the name of Moses.

* Tota enim fabula Judæorum Ægyptiacorum superbiæ debetur, qui cùm maximi Platonicam philosophiam facerent, ejus gloriam gentilibus inviderunt, contenderúntque meliorem ejus

flattering was not likely soon to be forgotten, especially amidst the earnest disputes which ensued with the enemies of the Faith. Justin Martyr seems to be persuaded, that Plato, as well as Pythagoras, had availed himself of the divine wisdom which Moses had left in Egypt.* And hence he supposes him to have drawn the very terms in which he mentions the Deity. He argues, that no proper name could be assigned to a Being who was the only God: for proper names are employed for the purpose of distinguishing inferior beings from each other. As therefore Moses characterized God by the words "I am," words simply declaratory of his existence; Plato expressed him by the equivalent phrase, "That which is."† Among the Latins, Ambrose may be selected as entertaining the same opinion. Though not engaged in the subject of the Unity, he finds an opportunity

partem ex Mose haustam esse. Hist. Philos. Per. 1. part. post. lib. ii. c. 6. s. 3.

* Πλάτων δὲ, ἀποδεξάμενος μὲν, ὡς ἔοικεν, τὴν περὶ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου Θεοῦ Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν διδασκαλίαν, ἣν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ γενόμενος ἔγνω, &c. Ad Græc. Cohort. p. 18.

† Τοῦτο ὁ δοκεῖ ἓν καὶ ταὐτὸν εἶναι, τῷ ἄρθρῳ μόνῳ διαλλάττον; ὁ μὲν γὰρ Μωϋσῆς, ὁ ὤν, ἔφη· ὁ δὲ Πλάτων, τὸ ὄν· ἑκάτερον δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων τῷ ἀεὶ ὄντι Θεῷ προσήκειν φαίνεται. ib. p. 20.

to introduce his persuasion, that Plato went to Egypt for the express purpose of obtaining an acquaintance with the history and writings of Moses and the Prophets!* The notion indeed became common; and among other titles bestowed on him by the growing fondness for his philosophy, he was complimented with those of the "Attic Moses," and the "Rival of Moses!"† The worst species of adulation, however, was reserved for the semi-pagan scholars of a later age. The revival of literature was, for a while, the dishonour of the Gospel. It would be equally tedious and disgraceful to dwell on the indecent manner in which the new studies were pursued. The profane tendency of those times is too openly displayed by Ficinus, the first interpreter of the works of Plato. His prefaces, commentaries, and addresses to Lorenzo of Medici are marked with a most puerile extacy concerning the wisdom recently

* Eruditionis gratiâ in Ægyptum, ut Möysis gesta, legis oracula, prophetarum dicta cognosceret. He is speaking of the punishment of sin and the consolations of the righteous after suffering. In Psalm. 118. Serm. 18. c. 4.

† This seems to have arisen from the unlucky observation of Numenius, preserved by Eusebius: Τὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ Πλάτων, ἢ Μωσῆς ἀττικίζων; Præp. Evang. lib. 11. c. 10.

discovered; and if revelation is remembered, it is only for the purpose of degrading it by an odious parallel. In one of the Dialogues he discovers the whole of theology. He seems to believe the Parmenides to be drawn from the divine mind, and scarcely to be understood but by the divine suggestion. In the Phædo, his impious absurdity is carried to the utmost height. In short, he supposes all revelation to be shadowed out in the Pagan philosophy, of which he is the editor. The New Testament is seen in the character of Socrates; the Old, in the doctrines of Plato: and through this insane persuasion, he is induced to express a wish, that Plato might be read in the churches!* This senseless admiration was revived in a later age; nor indeed is it wholly extinct even in our own. Mosheim has justly exposed the injudicious raptures of Andrew Dacier, and the force of that prejudice which led him to represent the lightest fancies as the most solid arguments in favour of Plato, whose doctrine he supposed to be hardly inferior to that of Christ

* Plato seems to have been his private deity. In his bedroom was a statue of Plato, with a lamp always burning before it. Fabric. Bibl. Græc. lib. iii. c. 3.

and his apostles.* Indeed the discourse on Plato, prefixed to the translation of some of the Dialogues, cannot be read without amazement at its absurdity. He insinuates, that Plato began to write about the time when prophecy ceased; and that this was divinely contrived, in order to prepare the world for the Gospel by an intermediate teaching of most of its principles!†

But I will not pursue this lamentable subject. A short view of the establishment and principles of the school of Alexandria will suffice to explain the mistake of the early fathers, and will prepare us for a more sound opinion concerning the knowledge which Plato appears to have had of the Deity.

We are informed by Strabo, that a musæum, or college of philosophy had been formed at

* Incredibili doctissimus hicce vir amore Platonis incensus erat, quo sæpenumerò sic abducitur, ut haud multum infra Christum et sanctissimos ejus legatos hominem collocare videatur;—quâ re accidit, ut levissimas rationes pro magni momenti argumentis interdum haberet. Opusc. De Creat. Mund. c. 15.

† One of his verbal observations, in support of this insane notion is, that Plato used ταπεινὸς in the sense of humble. A plain anticipation of the New Testament!

Alexandria in the time of the Ptolemies.* It was erected and endowed by their munificence; and situated, by signal favour, within the precincts of their own palace. The members lived at a common table, and the whole establishment was placed under the control of a priest, to whom was also committed the administration of the sacred rites. He was appointed to his office by the sovereign; and when Egypt fell under the power of Rome, the nomination of the president passed to the Cæsars. The school obtained much renown. Grammar, rhetoric, poetry, philosophy, astronomy, music, medicine, and every other art and science known in those ages, were taught by professors in each branch; and the ingenuous youth of all the civilized world resorted to it as to a common place of instruction.

After a while, however, the antient mode of teaching began to be abandoned. Either through a wish of yielding to the superstitious temper of Egypt, always prone to mix fanati-

* Τῶν δὲ βασιλείων μέρος ἐστὶ, καὶ τὸ Μουσεῖον, ἔχον περίπατον καὶ ἐξέδραν, καὶ οἶκον μέγαν, ἐν ᾧ τὸ συσσίτιον τῶν μετεχόντων τοῦ Μουσείου φιλολόγων ἀνδρῶν· ἐστὶ δὲ τῇ συνόδῳ ταύτῃ καὶ χρήματα κοινὰ, καὶ ἱερεὺς ὁ ἐπὶ τῷ Μουσείῳ τεταγμένος, τότε μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν βασιλέων, νῦν δ' ὑπὸ Καίσαρος. Lib. xvii. p. 546. Compare Cave, Hist. Litt. in voc. Athenagoras.

cism with its literature, or of pleasing by a syncretism the tastes of scholars, brought from different and distant nations;—either through the fatigue of the multiplicity of doctrines, maintained by so many masters of philosophy, or the ambition of forming a new sect; an attempt was made to compound the principal opinions of the other schools into one system. The tenets of Pythagoras were blended with those of Plato. The extravagancies of the orientalists were added to the compilation; and of materials thus discordant it was proposed to establish an uniform and comprehensive scheme of philosophy and theology.* When this attempt began, however, does not clearly appear. Mosheim attributes it to Potamon, whom, on the authority of Suidas, he places in the age of Augustus.†

* Alexandrinos, naturâ superstitiosos, et ad augendas religiones pronissimos, philosophiam Pythagorico-Platonicam dudum apertis amplexibus recepisse, et cum eâ omnis generis religionis, itemque varia doctrinarum, maximè Orientalium, capita conflâsse in unum, et corpus aliquod theologiæ excudisse, quod de Deo et divinis emanationibus multa garriendo, pandocheum omnium ferè religionum esset. Brucker, Per. 2, lib. i. c. 2. Sect. iv. § 19. Compare § 2. He states this as one of the points necessary to be remembered in order to understand the Eclectic philosophy which ensued.

† Dissert. Eccles. vol. i. p. 92. He notices the different

But Brucker is inclined to bring him down to a later time, and to make him coeval with Diogenes Laertius, by whom he is briefly mentioned. However this may be, it is allowed by both, that a disposition to reconcile the different schools, had been shewn before the formation of the more celebrated Eclectic sect by Ammonius, towards the close of the second century.* He became the father of the junior Platonics; and availing himself of the spirit already excited, he united with his own doctrines, those which pleased him in every other school. That of Epicurus alone was excluded from his plan, which was farther distinguished by two particulars of essential importance to our subject. While Ammonius professed to adopt whatever was acceptable in Aristotle, Zeno, and the philosophers at large, he gave a marked pre-eminence to Plato, from whose confessed superiority was derived one of the names by which

opinion of Brucker in another treatise in the same volume. P. 754.

* Prodit obscuritas Potamonis, exiguam fortunam ejus conamina habuisse, et in ipsâ herbâ fuisse suffocata. Feliciori successu, ut ampliori quoque consilio rem aggressus est Ammonius Alexandrinus, à vitæ genere Saccas dictus, qui exspirante sæculo secundo et ineunte tertio vixit. Brucker. ib. § 4.

the sect was known. At the same time, an insidious use was made of the Scriptures, which were now every where dispersed, and which, through the force of Divine truth, were drawing mankind away from a vain philosophy, to the better knowledge of God and their duty. It was consonant with the plan of Ammonius, to adopt parts of Christianity itself, and to modify them to his own purpose. Such of the doctrines of the Gospel, therefore, as were supposed to be compatible with the philosophy of Plato, were received into the system; while others were explained away by an artful interpretation, or supposed, by a forced similitude of phrase, to be already familiar to the Pagan schools. And thus was the pernicious design accomplished of raising the character of philosophy by the secret aid of Christianity; of giving to the latter the occasional appearance of a derivation from the former, and, in all cases, of exalting Platonism above the Gospel.* For

* Cùm elegantiora et veriora haud pauca apud Christianos inveniri convictus nôsset, metueret autem, nè ineptè meliora reliquisse videretur, Protei naturam induit, mutando, variando, pingendóque Platoni eos sensus affinxit, qui Christianis propiores essent; tum quæ præstantiora Christianorum dogmata erant, recocta, et ad sui systematis normam reformata recepit, vel quæ recipere non poterat, verborum tamen similitudine

this evil work Ammonius was too well prepared. He had been born of Christian parents, and was bred up in the faith. When, therefore, he revolted to Paganism,* he carried with him an acquaintance with Christianity hitherto unknown to the Heathen schools. And the mischief done was in proportion to the superior means which he possessed.

In imitation of the Pagan school of Alexandria, a catechetical school had been formed there by the Christians from the earliest time of the propagation of the Gospel.† This was in high repute when the sect of Ammonius was formed. Some of the Platonics, therefore,

imitatus est, ut haberet, quæ Christianis triumphum acturis opponeret, quæque in suo solo enata tamen esse gloriaretur Brucker. ib. § 21.

* Is Christianis parentibus natus, et in Christianâ religione institutus et educatus erat; at virilem quum ætatem attigisset, ad avitam religionem et multorum numinum cultum deficiebat. Mosheim, Diss. Eccles. vol. i. p. 101, &c.

† Ad hujus gymnasii imitationem (the school founded by the Ptolemies) ab ipsis nascentis Christianismi incunabulis schola fidelium sacra à B. Marco Alexandriæ est instituta, in quâ rudiores primis fidei Christianæ mysteriis erudirentur, constitutis ad id præstantissimis magistris.—Et hæc erat celeberrima illa Κατηχήσεως schola Alexandrina, cujus frequens apud scriptores ecclesiasticos occurrit mentio. Cave, Hist. Lit. in voc. Athenagoras.

embraced Christianity; and to this they were induced perhaps by those parts of it with which they had been made acquainted through the new philosophy. Nor is it to be wondered, that these persons should, for a while at least, understand the doctrines of the Gospel in an imperfect manner, or that they should add to their Christian profession, certain interpretations not strictly consonant with it.* To this source we must trace that accommodation of philosophy to faith, which we observe in some of the writings of Athenagoras, who became one of the more distinguished rectors of the catechetical school.† The same prejudice in

* Utinam semper ita fecissent philosophi Christiani, quemadmodum decebat, nec externâ quâdam dogmatum et institutionum similitudine decepti fuissent, ut pro Christianis haberent, quæ ad speciem tantùm Christiana videbantur. Sed obstitit illis partìm amor philosophiæ, partìm imperitia et ingenii imbecillitas, ne cuncta ritè expenderent: ex quo evenit, ut in Christianam multa transtulerint philosophiam, quæ toto genere à disciplinâ Christianâ dissident. Mosheim, Diss. Eccles. vol. i. p. 97.

† Non solùm philosophiam Platonicam publicè docuit, sed et scholæ Christianorum catecheticæ apud Alexandrinos præfuit, Christianam religionem in ipso quoque pallio professus. Cave, ib. Compare the mention already made of this tendency of Athenagoras; ch. iv. p. 165.

favour of Eclectic principles, strikes us in others of the same school, in Origen, and Clement named of Alexandria.* On the other hand, those who, under the protection of the Platonic sect, kept themselves aloof from the Gospel, were its worst and most dangerous enemies. The Christian writers had now exposed, with so much success, the native foulness of Paganism, that many were ashamed to follow it. To these the eclectics offered a convenient escape. They held a middle station, and allured to their standard all who were disgusted by the vulgar theology, but yet continued hostile to the Gospel.†

The success of this fatal sect was rapid and extensive. Another great support of it soon sprung up in Plotinus, whom Augustin so emphatically mentions as the best interpreter of the mind of Plato. He established a school of high reputation in Italy.‡ Porphyry laboured

* Mosheim, Diss. Eccles. vol. i. p. 95.

† Eo verò potissimùm consilio conditum est, quò res Deorum sensìm collabentes servarentur ab interitu, et Christianorum in veteres superstitiones tela confringerentur, ipsáque eorum religio, si fieri posset, extirparetur. Mosheim, Diss. Eccles. vol. i. p. 108.

‡ Hic, quum Romæ scholam aperuisset, totam ferè Italiam

to spread the same doctrines over Sicily.* Plutarch (not of Chæronea) became a professor of them at Athens;† while from Alexandria itself the system was carried into Syria, and for a while flourished in an extraordinary degree at Antioch,‡ a city, in which the followers of the faith had been first distinguished by the name of Christians. Its progress was indeed checked by the civil establishment of the Gospel; but the hopes of the school were soon revived by Julian, himself an Eclectic.§ After his death, however, it decayed. Its existence was continued till the age of Justinian, by whose firmness it was finally suppressed.‖

Ammonii doctrinâ infecit. He was a scholar of Ammonius. Mosheim, Diss. Eccles. vol. i. p. 112.

* Is Siciliam et alias provincias Romani orbis hoc philosophiæ genere replevit. He was a scholar of Plotinus. ib.

† In Græciam Plutarchus quidam, Atheniensis, hanc intulit philosophandi formam. From this school arose Syrianus, Proclus, Isidorus, and Damascius. ib. p. 113.

‡ Ex Ægypto, ad finitimos populos, maximè ad Syros, hæc secta transiit, multísque in locis, præsertim Antiochiæ, quæ caput est Syriæ, consedit. ib.

§ Juliano regnante, qui præter modum huic doctrinæ favebat, quam ipsemet complexus erat, parum à summo gloriæ et felicitatis humanæ apice distare videbantur Platonici. ib. p. 114.

‖ Justinianus imperator aut solum eos vertere, aut ad Christianorum religionem accedere jussit. ib.

This short history will be sufficient to account for the extraordinary influence of the name of Plato on the Christian world, and the astonishment of many at the supposed coincidence of Platonism with Revelation.* It will also explain the false admiration which was entertained for Plato by many of the early writers of the church, while they employed themselves in combating other parts of the Doctrine attributed to him. In fact, the knowledge which they had of Plato, was drawn chiefly from the mixed interpretations of his followers; and it is the decided judgment of Brucker, that the philosophy which Augustin so fervently extolled,

* Not only had some of the later writers imitated the doctrines of the Gospel, and produced a Trinity unknown to Plato, —the illumination of the Spirit, the return of the soul to God, &c. but particular words were now used in a solemn sense, borrowed from the Scriptures.—Vocabula, quæ de Deo, de animæ naturâ, de purgatione animæ, de misero corrupti hominis statu, et de aliis rebus adhibent, ejus sunt generis, ut apertum sit, è novi fœderis divinis scriptoribus ea mutuò esse sumpta, minimè verò in scholis philosophorum nata. Testes hujus rei omnes illos facio, qui maximi inter ethnicos sunt nominis, philosophos, Plotinum, Jamblichum, Hieroclem, Simplicium, et alios, in quibus nomina σωτὴρ, ανακαίνωσις, παλιγγενεσία, φωτισμὸς, et infinita alia, philosophis olim incognita, utramque faciunt paginam. Mosheim, Dissert. Eccles. vol. i. p. 339.

before he became acquainted with his error, and had the courage openly to retract it, was not that of Plato, but of Plotinus.* From this view of the false credit assumed for him by the Alexandrian school, let us turn then to Plato himself, and briefly inquire, what is the probable amount of the knowledge which he possessed of the Deity.

From those passages of Justin Martyr which have been already quoted, it appears, that some of the compliments so zealously paid to Plato in the early ages of the Gospel, arose from the use of certain expressions, to which much solemnity was attached, in his physical writings. The Parmenides is supposed to teah the doctrine of divine things. The Timæus treats of the knowledge of nature.† But these subjects

* Illa enim, quam mirè effert, Platonica philosophia non alia est quàm Plotiniana. Per. 2. part 2. lib. 1. c. 3. § 11. Indeed, he speaks of Plotinus as having the reputation, in that age, of being the best interpreter of the mind of Plato:—Plotinus certè, nostræ memoriæ vicinus temporibus, Platonem cæteris excellentiùs intellixisse laudatur. Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 10. It has happened to Plato to be obscured by the growth of his own fame; and the glosses of his followers have hidden his original meaning.

† Justin Martyr speaks of it as being also a treatise of theology:—*ἐν τῷ ἐσπουδασμένῳ ἀυτοῦ λόγῳ Τιμαίῳ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ θεολογεῖν ἐπιχείρει.* Ad Græc. Cohort. p. 20.

are occasionally interchanged, and in the discussion of both, are employed the terms of "the one," and "that which is." In the former of these dialogues, the principal inquiry is concerning a metaphysical unity, whether there be one thing, or many. It had been affirmed by Parmenides in his celebrated poem, that "all things were one." The principle of this decision, which was sufficiently obscure in itself, (for the term "one" may be used sometimes concerning that which possesses parts, and sometimes concerning that which is without parts,) was, of course, unknown to the less scientific part of mankind: and it appears, that they were disposed to indulge their mirth at the expense of such as maintained the doctrine. Zeno was offended at so gross a liberty. He therefore came to the assistance of Parmenides with another position, differing in words, as Socrates observes, but agreeing in sense, that all things were "not many."* Hence the

* Σὺ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ποιήμασιν ἓν φῂς εἶναι τὸ πᾶν, καὶ τούτων τεκμήρια παρέχῃ, καλῶς καὶ εὖ· ὅδε δὲ αὖ οὐ πολλὰ φησὶν εἶναι, τεκμήρια δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς πάμπολλα καὶ παμμεγέθη παρέχεται· τὸ οὖν τὸν μὲν, ἕν φάναι, τὸν δὲ, μὴ πολλὰ, καὶ οὕτως ἑκάτερον λέγειν ὥστε μηδὲν τῶν αὐτῶν εἰρηκέναι δοκεῖν, σχεδόν τι λέγοντας

reader is introduced to a knowledge of the properties of "one." He finds that it is without parts, and infinite; that it is comprehended neither in any other, nor in itself; that it is without shape, and in no place. On the same principle, it is subject to no change, and cannot pass into any other condition; yet it is not, on that account, stationary. It is neither like to itself, nor any other, nor is it different. It has neither equality nor inequality; and having no connection with time, is neither old nor young: and since no description can be given of that which has no determinate mode of being, it has no name, and cannot be declared in any certain manner.* These and many other things are circumstantially stated; and the question is discussed in various ways, and on contrary suppositions. It is extremely difficult to conjecture what may be the tendency of a reasoning thus complicated and abstruse; and perhaps it is this very circumstance which has induced

ταυτὰ, ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς τὸς ἄλλος, φαίνεται ἡμῖν τὰ εἰρημένα εἰρῆσθαι. In Parm. p. 1110.

* Οὐδ' ὀνομάζεται ἄρα, οὐδὲ λέγεται, οὐδὲ δοξάζεται, οὐδὲ γιγνώσκεται· οὐδὲ τὶ τῶν ὄντων αὐτῷ αἰσθάνεται. The particulars selected in the text, and many more, are mentioned, p. 1117—1120, ed. Ficin.

the Platonic commentators to interpret it into a mystical allusion to the nature of the Deity. With this, however, is also interwoven the doctrine of ideas; and if it has any reasonable connection with the great position of "one," as understood by the Alexandrian school, the meaning probably is, that the difference in the species of things, constituted according to their respective exemplars, does not destroy the assertion concerning the unity of principle.* If therefore, any tolerable conclusion can be drawn

* Plato is said to have been the first who defined the doctrine of ideas:—Τὴν περὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν πρῶτος ἐπιχειρήσας ὁρίζεσθαι. Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. ii. c. 3. Yet he is by no means consistent wiih himself, sometimes supposing them to be only exemplars, or noetic models of things; and sometimes representing them as having a positive agency in their formation, and communicating a consistency and stability to matter. Brucker complains besides, that the doctrine of Parmenides is wrested to this ideal system; and the commentator, in a late edition of Plato, Bipont. 1786, abruptly adandons the argument of the Parmenides, on account of the tedious and unprofitable nature of the discussion:—equidem hæc legens tanto afficior tædio, ut iis referendis immorari prorsùs nequeam.—In short, none could understand this dialogue, except those mystical commentators who endeavoured to set up the credit of Plato against the Gospel: and these may be understood in their turn, if a more fortunate race of interpreters should arise to explain their explanation.

from a dissertation immoderately perplexed and obscure; and almost equally unintelligible, with, or without the aid of the fanatical interpretation which has been bestowed upon it, the doctrine of "one" means either one whole, or, all things essentially flowing from one; or, having their only subsistence by a participation in the properties of one!

The character which Brucker gives of the Eleatic philosophy of Zeno, contains some particulars of resemblance with the doctrine of Plato concerning "one."* His view, also, of the poem of Parmenides, (of which, however, there remain only some obscure fragments,) may in some measure assist the meaning of the dialogue. He seems to have held, that truth, and the essence of things, were not to be found in the mutability of matter, or the uncertainty

* Nihil ex non-ente exsurgere, et ideò unum tantùm ens, nempe Deum esse.—Ens hoc esse excellentissimum et æternum et unum, ideòque unum Deum esse et gubernare omnia; sibi omni ex parte similem esse, rotundum, neque finitum neque infinitum, et neque moveri posse, neque immobilem esse, neque locum neque motum. Ex quibus patet, dum prædicata ferè omnia de Deo Zeno removeat, impossibile esse in veram ejus mentem penetrare, metaphysicam sibi entis notionem effingentis, et nugis dialecticis cogitata sua obscurantis. Per. 1. part. post. lib. ii. c. 11, § 11.

of opinion and the senses. Hence a marked distinction was drawn between physical and metaphysical knowledge.

From the latter, on which alone a reliance may be placed, it appears, that there is only one principle of all things; that it is immoveable and immutable; and therefore that the universe is one. It is also eternal, nor had it a beginning; and it is of a spherical form, a figure extolled for its superior properties by Plato in his Timæus. The one principle of other things is therefore the only Being; other things are non-entities; and, in strictness of language, there is no formation of things by generation, no dissolution of them by corruption, but their outward appearances are only illusions.*

This system, while it appears to do honour to the primary principle, is, however, effectually injurious to it: and if Plato is to be judged by such rules, his Deity, which, in the reverential interpretation of Augustin, was lately placed beyond all the objects of sense, is ulti-

* Esse omne rerum principium unum, immobile et immutabile, et ita universum esse unum; ídque æternum esse, et originis expers ac sphæricâ indutum formâ; solum hoc unum ens esse, reliqua non-entia, nihil itaque propriè generari vel corrumpi, sed species ejus nobis tantùm illudere. ib. § 8.

mately reduced to a participation in the grossness of matter. Either the incorporeal Being is linked in a degrading union with his own eternal world; and, on this account, the same qualities may be nearly predicated of both, notwithstanding the existence allowed to the one, and denied to the other; or, this visible world is nothing but an efflux from the Deity; and in this sense, all things being one, the whole is material together!*

Some of these notions seem to be still preserved in the Eastern parts of the world; and

* Universa ferè juniorum Platonicorum turba sanxit mundum *ex ipso Deo* ab omni æternitate fluxisse, et Deum idcirco esse omnia. Mosheim, Opusc. p. 200. He justly exclaims on this:—Exeat verò à nobis, suásque sibi res solus habeat, cui tam fœda potest placere sententia, quam ego deteriorem illorum esse dogmate arbitror, qui perennem æterno Deo materiam adjungunt.

In Milton's address to light, a part of this dangerous philosophy seems to be remembered, though with some decent hesitation concerning it.—

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born,
Or of the eternal coëternal beam,
May I express thee unblamed? Since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.

Par. Lost, book 3.

anciently perhaps were better known to the religions of Europe, than they are to the philosophical inquiries of the present day. The Indian Brehme is said to be all things, the sky, the earth, and the heaven. He is the sole, irradiating power. Sensible objects have no separate being. They are but outward manifestations of him, and in themselves, therefore, are nothing.

This result of the inquiry concerning the "one," will be sufficient to explain the doctrine in the Timæus concerning "that which is." Plutarch informs us, in what manner both expressions were understood to have the same meaning. When the worshipper went to consult the Delphic oracle, the salutation, directed as it were towards him from the god, was, "Know thyself." To this he was supposed to reply, "Thou art:" or according to the more antient custom, "Thou art one."* Being is therefore unity, for, as he observes, God is not many;† and whatever differs from him, is no-

* Ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς ἕκαστον ἡμῶν ἐνταῦθα προσιόντα οἷον ἀσπαζόμενος, προσαγορεύει, τὸ Γνῶθι σαυτον, ὅ τε χαιρε δὴ ὀδὲν μεῖόν ἐστιν· ἡμεῖς δὲ πάλιν ἀμειβόμενοι τὸν Θεὸν, Εἶ φαμὲν—ἢ καὶ νὴ Δι', ὡς ἐνίοι τῶν παλαῖων, Εἶ ἕν. De Ei Delphico, c. 17—20.

† Ὀυ γὰρ πολλὰ τὸ θεῖόν ἐστιν—Αλλ' ἕν εἶναι δεῖ τὸ ὄν, ὥσπερ ὄν τὸ ἕν. ib. The term Ei is interpreted in other senses by dif-

thing. On the phrase itself, therefore, I will not dwell, since the doctrine which it contains, is referable to the point already discussed. The leading principles also of this dialogue have been incidentally mentioned; nor will it be necessary to enter into the mode in which the world was formed, the nature of its exemplar or the properties of its figure, the elements and their proportions, the mutable, immutable, and mixed kinds of things from which was compounded the soul of the world, or the production of the gods and inferior animals. For the present purpose it will be sufficient to advert to the speech of the Demiurge, in which he declares his superiority to the other deities, to men, and terrestrial creatures. He reminds the secondary gods, who had been produced by himself, that, though they might conceive themselves to be necessarily immortal on that account,* yet they

ferent speakers in the dialogue. But Eusebius had selected the meaning given to it by Ammonius, which indeed was best suited to his purpose. Præp. Evang. lib. xi. c. 11.

* Ἐπεὶ οὖν πάντες ὅσοι τε περιπολοῦσι φανερῶς, καὶ ὅσοι φαίνονται καθ' ὅσον ἂν ἐθέλωσι θεοὶ, γένεσιν ἔσχον, λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸς ὁ τόδε τὸ πᾶν γεννήσας τάδε, θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς, πατήρ τε ἔργων, ἃ δι' ἐμῆ γενόμενα, ἄλυτα, ἐμῆ γε θελοντος. In Tim. p. 1054.—The evil principle afterwards mentioned, alludes, as

were generated, and therefore liable to dissolution. The evil principle has a tendency to destroy them; but he is superior, in this instance, to its malignancy, and pledges himself that their being shall be continued. He then commissions them to complete the work of the universe, and furnishes them with a part of the requisite materials. Before the formation of the world, he had provided a soul for it. This he had mixed and tempered in a bowl. The remains of the mixture, yet with some difference in the preparation, he now gives to the gods, and bids them imitate his primary agency. It is beneath his dignity to attend to the formation of terrestrial animals. With the materials, therefore, afforded by the Demiurge for the human soul, and with some inferior matter taken

I believe, to the perverseness of matter, always crossing the designs of the Deity, and never perfectly subdued by him. Augustin has quoted this speech against the later Platonics for the purpose of proving that God may bestow immortality on the bodies as well as the souls of men:—Hoc tantùm contra istos commemorandum putavi, qui se Platonicos vocari vel esse gloriantur;—et quærentes quid in doctrinâ Christianâ reprehendant, exagitant æternitatem corporum, tanquam hæc sint inter se contraria, ut et beatitudinem quæramus animæ, et eam semper esse velimus in corpore velut ærumnoso vinculo colligatam. Civ. Dei, lib. xiii. c. 16.

by themselves from the elements,—to which it was to be finally restored, the gods compose mankind.*

These specimens of doctrine are drawn from both parts of what was termed the natural philosophy of Plato. But, whatever interpretation be made in his favour, we observe him, in the former instance, establishing a mere metaphysical principle, which is too refined and visionary to have any influence on human conduct or human happiness; and in the latter, placing mankind at a careful distance from the Demiurge, who is too dignified to trouble himself with them or their concerns.

Hence arose the necessity of admitting the existence of other deities; and on this doubtless was founded his own worship of the popular gods. It would be superfluous to point out, at any length, the undoubted idolatry of Plato amidst his supposed discovery of the real Unity,

* Ταῦτ' εἶπε· καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον κρατῆρα, ἐν ᾧ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ψυχὴν κεραννυς ἔμισγε, τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπόλοιπα κατεχεῖτο μίσγων τρόπον μὲν τίνα τὸν αὐτὸν. ib.—νοήσαντες οἱ παῖδες τὴν τοῦ Πατρὸς τάξιν, ἐπείθοντο ἀυτῇ, καὶ λαβόντες ἀθάνατον ἀρχὴν θνητοῦ ζώου, μιμούμενοι τὸν σφέτερον δημιουργὸν, πυρὸς καὶ γῆς, ὕδατός τε καὶ ἀέρος ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου δαιειζόμενοι μόρια, ὡς ἀποδοθησόμενα πάλιν, εἰς ταυτὸ λαμβανόμενα ξυνεκόλλων. ib. p. 1054—5.

a doctrine utterly irreconcileable with the practice of polytheism.* He makes Socrates himself an idolater. When, in his Apology, he speaks of "the God," he commonly means the Delphic Apollo,† in obedience to whose declaration, he adopted that mode of argument for the conviction of error, on account of which he became so obnoxious to the Athenians. In the Euthyphro he declares the gods to be the bestowers of the only good which can happen to men.‡ In his private conversation with Crito, as well as in the presence of his judges, he states his belief in them, and swears by them singly and collectively. Nay, he establishes their existence through his assertion of the reality of his own demon. He allows that the demons are not properly gods. They were

* Another conclusive argument against Plato's supposed discovery of the Unity is drawn from the eternity of matter, one of the undoubted results of his philosophy. This is well stated by Mosheim: Quum toties de uno Deo loquatur, haud tamen existimavit, vel vidit, tolli unitatem Dei, si materia æquè æterna censeatur, atque ipse Deus est. Opusc. p. 184.

† Ταῦτα γὰρ κελευεί ὁ Θεὸς. Apol. p. 23.—and ἐμοὶ δὲ τοῦτο, ὃς ἐγὼ φημὶ, προστέτακται ὑπο τοῦ Θεοῦ πράττειν. ib. p. 26.

‡ οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡμῖν ἀγαθὸν ὅ,τι ἂν μὴ ἐκεῖνοι δῶσιν. In Euth. p. 11.

supposed to be the children of the gods by the Nymphs. To affirm a demon, therefore, as Socrates constantly did, was to presuppose the gods.*

This introduces to our notice another, or mixed race of deities, sprung from gods and mortals. It was a settled maxim of Plato, that the Deity had no communication with man.† At the same time he allowed the existence of demons, invested them with local presidencies, and, on account of their extraordinary prudence, quick apprehension, and exact memory, supposed them to know all the thoughts of the human heart.‡ Hence he conferred on them

* Ἐι δὲ αὖ οἱ Δαίμονες θεῶν παῖδες εἰσι νόθοι τινὲς, ἢ ἐκ νυμφῶν, ἢ ἐκ τινῶν ἄλλων, ὧν δὴ καὶ λεγονται, τίς ἂν ἀνθρώπων θεῶν μὲν παῖδας ἡγοῖτο εἶναι, θεὸς δὲ μὴ; Apol. p. 21. It is needless to say, that Plato ambitiously attributes his own thoughts to Socrates—cui etiam, non sibi, scripta sua voluit tribui. Fab. Bib. Græc. In Plat.

† Θεὸς δὲ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ μίγνυται. In Conviv. p. 1194.

‡ Μετέχοντα δὲ φρονήσεως θαυματῆς, ἅτε γένος ὄντα ἐυμαθὲς τε καὶ μνήμονος, γιγνώσκειν μὲν ξύμπασαν τὴν ἡμετέραν αὐτὰ διάνοιαν λέγωμεν. In Epinom. p. 1011. This is an important sentence, as it shows us the gross and degrading notions of Paganism concerning Divine omniscience. In the Cratylus, Plato drrives the name of demons from δαήμων. But it is remarkable, that, in the same dialogue, he also pronounces a wise man to be a demon—ὀρθῶς δαίμονα καλεῖσθαι. Here his

the office of interpreters, or reporters, of the actions of mankind to the higher deities. Of this part of his mythology much corrupt use was made by his successors, who extracted from it a regular system of mediatorial agency.

In the demons were united the different qualities of gods and men; and to these were added, others peculiar to themselves.* Of the latter description were their bodies. These were aërial, and adapted to that middle region which they possessed between heaven and earth. But by the kindness of the superior gods, they were also gifted with immortality, and in this particular, they were similar to the gods themselves. On the other hand, they approached the condition of man. They were of an animal nature; and with the possession of rational souls, were subject to the influences of passion. They were agitated with some of the worst feelings of mor-

etymology (in which he is generally unfortunate) is pursued till it injures his mythology.

* Augustin, who takes much pains in refuting this philosophy, states it from Apuleius—Dæmones esse genere animalia, animo passiva, mente rationalia, corpore aërea, tempore æterna. Horum verò quinque, tria priora illis esse nobiscum communia, quartum proprium, quintum eos cum Diis habere commune. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 16.

tals;* they were irritated with injuries; and again, corruptly open to flattery, they were appeased by attentions, and won by presents. They took a vain and selfish delight in the honours paid to them by those who solicited their intercession with the gods; and, of course, were grievously offended at the omission or refusal of the expected ceremonies.

The authority invented for them was adapted to their situation and nature. As they were the middle agents between men and the inaccessible gods; as they alone were empowered to carry the petitions of mortals to heaven, and to bring from thence the suitable grants or refusals, they had the superintendence of all those arts by which men endeavoured to ascertain the divine intentions. Accordingly, within their department were placed augurs, aruspices, and soothsayers. To them belonged the secret and ter-

* Eisdem quibus homines animi perturbationibus agitari, irritari injuriis, obsequiis donisque placari, gaudere honoribus, diversis sacrorum ritibus oblectari, et in eis si quid neglectum fuerit, commoveri. ib.—Plato seems to have given pleasures and pains to his Demons, in order to save his Deity, who must have no disturbance of passion on account of the good or bad conduct of men: Θεὸν μὲν γὰρ δὴ τὸν τέλος ἔχοντα τῆς θείας μοίρας, ἔξω τούτων εἶναι, λύπης τε καὶ ἡδονῆς. In Epinom. p. 1011.

rific practices of magic, and the lighter province of dreams and omens.* When Hannibal was about to lose the sight of one of his eyes, it was their business to suggest, in his sleep, the approaching misfortune. They foretold to Flaminius, by the entrails of the victim, the danger which threatened his fleet. They instigated Attius Nævius to perform the miracle of the whetstone severed by the razor. The tokens which foreran the attainment of empire are also directed by them. They sent the eagle which hovered over Tarquinius Priscus, and lighted up the lambent flame, which played round the head of Servius Tullus.†

This doctrine is detailed, with much fulness, by Apuleius in his book on the god or demon of Socrates. In a strain of inflated and affected oratory, he states the philosophical grounds of

* Ad eos pertinere divinationes augurum, aruspicum, vatum, atque somniorum: ab his quoque esse miracula magorum. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 16.

† Horum etiam munus et opera atque cura est, ut Annibali somnia orbitatem oculi comminarentur: Flaminio extispicia periculum classis prædicerent; Attio Nævio auguria miraculum cotis addicant: ita ut nonnullis regni futuri signa præcurrant; —ut Tarquinius Priscus aquilâ obumbretur ab apice; Servius Tullus flammâ colluminetur à capite. Apuleius de Deo Socratis.

the opinion expressed by Plato in the Epinomis and other dialogues, concerning the order of demons. The highest heaven is possessed by the chief deity; the æther, by the visible deities, or stars; and the earth by man. What inhabitants then are allotted to the air? Only the birds. But these do not fly far above the surface of the earth, certainly never above the top of Olympus, the highest of all mountains; and, according to the opinion of the most authentic geometricians, Olympus does not exceed ten stadia in perpendicular height.* Is there nothing then between the top of Olympus and the moon? No tolerable cosmology will allow such a void. Here then at length is obtained a convenient situation for the demons, who are invested with the charges already described. These were the efforts of Platonic philosophy in the second century, an age, from which, as we have already seen, the corruptions of that doctrine begin to take their rise.† The

* Qui aves aëri attribuat, falsum sententiæ meritissimò dixeris; quippe cùm avis nulla ultra Olympi verticem sublimatur. Qui cùm excellentissimus omnium perhibetur, tamen altitudinem perpendiculo si metiare, ut geometræ autumant, stadia decem altitudo fastigii non æquiparat; &c. Apul. ib.

† For a brief view of the changes which took place in the

manner in which Apuleius conducts his subject, is sufficiently puerile and ridiculous;* but the motive was probably of a more serious nature. He, and more particularly the succeeding Platonics, seem to have enlarged and methodized the system of their leader,† that they might more effectually counteract the growing reception of the Gospel, adulterate its tenets, and weaken the faith, now spreading through the empire, in the one true Mediator between god

Platonic philosophy, after the general diffusion of the knowledge of the Gospel, consult Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Cent. ii. Part 2. He has discussed the subject at greater length in his Ecclesiastical Dissertations.

* He seems conscious of the opinion which would be entertained of him;—ne videar poëtico ritu incredibilia confingere. ib. But in vain he endeavours to shelter himself. He is what he disclaims.

† In the Epinomis, the doctrine of Plato concerning the gods and demons is stated with much solemnity; and the maintenance of the honours paid to all of them, whether visible or invisible, is defended upon the principle of custom, and the impossibility of getting better intelligence: *καὶ μὴν ὁδ' ὧν ὁ πάτριος νόμος εἴρηκε περὶ θυσιῶν ἀποκωλύσει (νομοθετης) μηδὲν τὸ παράπαν εἰδώς· ὥσπερ ὁδ' ὄν δυνατὸν εἰδέναι τῇ θνητῇ φύσει τῶν τοιούτων πέρι.* p. 1011. In the Convivium the doctrine delivered by Socrates, concerning the demons, is licentiousness rather than theology. He professes to remember it from the conversation of old Diotima, a soothsaying woman, who instructed him, when young, in erotic affairs! p. 1192.

and man, Jesus Christ.* And hence it is, that Augustin is so copious in this part of his subject, and shews so marked an anxiety to impress the world with a proper sense of the Mediatorial office of the Saviour.

We have now seen what is the amount of the doctrine of Plato concerning the Deity. Has he supplied the defect which we lately discovered in the system of Varro? If Varro appeared to have lost the deity of Plato, is that Deity, when found, more effective than the soul of the world? Was the precious gift of the "life to come," to be expected from such a being? And was the eternal welfare of mankind better secured by the Grecian philosophy, than by the Roman mythology? The god of Plato, from whom all things are said to proceed, is rather an ideal principle than a Supreme Being. He is sometimes called by the equivalent terms of "the world," "Olympus," and the

* Brucker states this to have been one of the leading features of the Eclectic philosophy:—Spiritus inferiores esse mediatores inter Deum et homines asserebat (Ammonius); hos colendos ideo esse contendebat, ut ad ineffabile numen aditum pararent. Per. ii. part 1, lib. i. cap. 2. sect. iv. § 21. Compare § 28.

"heaven" itself,* and appears to be the constitution of the universe, instead of its governor. At the utmost, he keeps himself aloof from man, and refuses a communication with him, lest he should be contaminated by the approach.† From such a deity, therefore, whatever be his fancied superiority to the deities of the popular mythology, eternal happiness cannot be expected by mortals. Human concerns are devolved to the inferior gods. Are these then the bestowers of everlasting life? The highest of them were formed by the Demiurge, and subsist only through him. In their own natures they are liable to dissolution, and are entirely dependent on his pleasure. But, not being immortal in their own right, they cannot confer on others a property which they do not themselves possess. Finally, is future happiness to be expected from the Platonic demons? Apuleius, who has expatiated at such length, on the properties of their bodies, is utterly silent

* Τίνα δὴ καὶ σεμνύνων ποτὲ λέγω Θεὸν; σχεδὸν ὠρανὸν· ὃν καὶ δικαιότατον, ὡς ξύμπαντες ἄλλοι δαίμονες ἅμα καὶ θεοὶ, τιμᾷν τε καὶ εὔχεσθαι διαφερόντως ἀυτῷ. In Epinom. p. 1006.

† Nullus Deus miscetur homini. Hoc præcipuum eorum sublimitatis ait (Apuleius) esse specimen, quod nullâ attrectatione hominum contaminantur. Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 16.

concerning any goodness to be attributed to their minds;* and it has already appeared, that they are subject to the same passions which degrade and enslave mankind. They are therefore wicked beings, and cannot bestow on their votaries the gifts of goodness. Do they then solicit from the superior gods that immortal happiness which is beyond their own ability to grant? The same wickedness still hinders them. They who are thus unfit to bestow eternal life, are equally unfit to convey it; and the precious reward itself would be polluted, if any god should confer it through the mediation of agents confessedly weak and sinful.†

* De his universaliter disserens, et tam multa loquens de aëreis eorum corporibus, de virtutibus animorum tacuit. Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 3.

† Quales preces hominum diis bonis per dæmones allegari putat, magicas, an licitas? Si magicas, nolunt tales; si licitas, nolunt per tales. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 19.

CHAPTER VII.

PLATO CONTINUED...HIS PRINCIPLE OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL...HIS HISTORY OF THE SOUL...INFERENCES FROM THE WHOLE...FALSE CREATION ASCRIBED TO HIS DEITY...FALSE IMMORTALITY TO THE SOUL.

WE have seen, that the happiness of the "life to come" was not to be expected from the Platonic ONE, the secondary gods, or the mixed race of demons. The question yet remains, whether this great defect in one of the most celebrated systems of natural religion, were compensated by some other advantage; whether, notwithstanding the incapacity proved against the gods, the soul of man were secure of happiness through any qualities, either derived from without, or resulting from its own nature.

To enumerate all the absurd and contradictory opinions of the Pagan schools concerning the soul, would be an unprofitable, if it were not an endless, task. From the time of Thales and Pythagoras, to whom we lately traced some of the earliest attempts in antient theo-

logy, the Greeks disputed concerning the soul and its qualities, whether it might be called body, or not. In the latter case, the question was, whether it were a mere intelligence, endued with the privilege of motion,—whether this motion were perpetual or voluntary,—or whether the thinking faculty were not resolvable into the force of self-moving numbers.* In the former, whether it were of an aërial species, or a fiery composition; or an equal mixture of fire, air, vapour, and another nameless quality, in which consisted its sensation;† whether it were any thing more than warm air, or the breath, or perhaps an homogeneous substance, consisting of the exhalations of the world and the internal vapours of man himself.‡

* Θαλῆς ἀπεφήνατο πρῶτος τὴν ψυχὴν, φύσιν ἀεικίνητον, ἢ ἀυτοκίνητον.—Πυθαγόρας, ἀριθμὸν ἑαυτὸν κινοῦντα· τὸν δ' ἀριθμὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ νοῦ παραλαμβάνει. Plutarch. de Plac. Phil. lib. iv. c. 2. In the first book is stated the correspondence between the four parts of the soul, and the virtues of the number four, the celebrated τετρακτὺς of Pythagoras.

† Οἱ δ' ἀπὸ Ἀναξαγόρου ἀεροειδῆ ἔλεγόν τε καὶ σῶμα—Δημόκριτος, πυρῶδες σύγκριμα·—Ἐπίκουρος, κρᾶμα ἐκ τεσσάρων, ἐκ ποιοῦ πυρώδους, ἐκ ποιοῦ ἀερώδους, ἐκ ποιοῦ πνευματικοῦ· ἐκ τετάρτου τινὸς ἀκατονομάστου, ὅ ἦν ἀυτῷ αἰσθητικόν. ib. c. 3. This is stated at greater length by Lucretius, lib. iii. 232.

‡ Οἱ Στωϊκοὶ, πνεῦμα θερμόν—Ἡράκλειτος—τὴν (ψυχὴν) ἐν

These and many more such suppositions may be seen in the treatise which bears the name of Plutarch, (but apparently without authority*) on philosophical opinions.

What were the systems most known to the Romans, or most approved by them, we learn from the Tusculan Questions of Cicero, who introduces his discussion of the immortality of the soul, with a statement of opinions concerning its nature and situation. Some regarded the soul and the body as one and the same thing. Consequently, they denied the doctrine of a separation, and pronounced death to be the termination of the entire man.† The strongest of these opinions is that which pretends to the

τοῖς ζώοις ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκτὸς καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀναθυμιάσεως ὁμογενῆ. Plut. ib. c. 3.

* Wyttenbach calls it "spurium opus. Ratio et oratio prorsùs abhorrent à Plutarchi ingenio; in materiâ si quid sit, de quo non statuo, Plutarchei; hoc à perditis quibusdam germanis libris compilatum sit."

† Cicero, who adopted the immortality rather through the authority of Plato, than any settled conviction of the truth of the doctrine, yet beautifully points out the uncomfortable nature of the contrary opinion.—Præclarum autem nescio quid adepti sunt, qui didicerunt, se, quum tempus mortis venisset, totos esse perituros. Quod ut sit (*nihil enim pugno*) quid habet ista res aut lætabile, aut gloriosum? Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. c. 21.

greatest antiquity. Dicæarchus wrote, in three books, an account of a disputation supposed to have been holden at Corinth* on this subject. For the sake of a more impressive authority, he employs as his principal orator, an old man said to be descended from the family of Deucalion. His doctrine is, that the soul is no more than a name, and therefore, that the use of such terms as animal, and animation, is fallacious. Neither in man, nor beast, does he allow the existence of a mind, or soul. All our powers of action and feeling are equally diffused through the living body, and are inseparable from it: they grow and are nourished with it, and are the general result of its composition and temperature.† But those who agreed in

* He seems to have had a perverse zeal on the forlorn side of the question. In the latter part of this book, Cicero mentions another treatise of Dicæarchus (a favourite writer with him) in proof of the mortality of the soul: Acerrimè autem deliciæ meæ Dicæarchus contra hanc immortalitatem disseruit; —is enim tres libros scripsit, qui Lesbiaci vocantur, quod Mitylenis sermo habetur; in quibus vult effieere animos esse mortales. C. 31.

† Pherecratem quendam Pthiotam senem, quem ait à Deucalione ortum, disserentem inducit, nihil esse omninò animum, et hoc esse nomen totum inane, frustràque animalia et animantes appellari: neque in homine inesse animum vel animam,

this general conclusion were at variance concerning the substance of what was popularly termed the soul. By some it was supposed to be no other than the heart;* and hence they accounted for the use of certain words familiar to the Roman language. Thus *excordes, vecordes, concordes,* and other such terms, were said to convey the true notion of the soul, through the mention of the heart. Some, again, supposed the soul to be not the heart itself, but the blood which was lodged in it; while others were equally positive in favour of the brain, or some interior and choice part of it.†

On the other hand it was affirmed, that man consisted of a body and a soul; that these were of different natures, and were separated from

nec in bestiâ; vímque omnem eam, quâ vel agamus quid, vel sentiamus, in omnibus corporibus vivis æquabiliter esse fusam, nec separabilem à corpore esse, quippe quæ nulla sit, nec sit quidquam nisi corpus unum et simplex, ita figuratum ut temperatione naturæ vigeat, et sentiat. ib. c. 10.

* Aliis cor ipsum animus videtur; ex quo excordes, vecordes, concordésque dicuntur, et Nasica ille prudens bis consul, corculum, et

Egregiè cordatus homo catus Æliu' Sextus. ib. c. 9.

† Empedocles animum esse censet cordi suffusum sanguinem. Aliis pars quædam cerebri visa est animi principatum tenere. ib.

each other by death. Yet they who agreed in this conclusion were also divided in opinion concerning the duration of the soul. Some supposed the soul to be dissipated soon after its escape from the body, as smoke gradually disappears, and is lost in the general air. Some attributed to it a long existence, and maintained that it did not perish till after a fixed period; while others bestowed upon it an immortality.* According to Cicero, the first of these whose works were then extant, was Pherecydes.† But he was content with the mere affirmation of his doctrine; nor did his successors enforce it with any arguments better than those which were drawn from the Pythagorean numbers till Plato appeared. He it was, who first taught the world the reasons, such as the philosophy of nature could teach, from which the soul of man was concluded to be immortal.‡

* Qui discedere animum censent, alii statim dissipari, alii diu permanere, alii semper. ib.

† Quod literis extet, Pherecydes Syrus primùm dixit animos hominum esse sempiternos. ib. c. 16.

‡ Rationem illi sententiæ suæ non ferè reddebant nisi quid erat numeris, aut descriptionibus explicandum. Platonem ferunt, ut Pythagoræos cognosceret, in Italiam venisse,—primùmque de animorum æternitate non solùm sensisse idem quod Pythagoras, sed rationem etiam attulisse. ib. c. 17.

Let us inquire then, what were the opinions of this chief of philosophers, as Cicero so often calls him, on a question of so much importance to mankind.

Plato's view of the immortality of the soul may be divided into two parts.

1. The principle, on which the doctrine of the immortality is founded.

2. The history of the soul in its three stages of existence, before its entrance into the body, during the possession of it, and after the separation from it.

1. The principle of the immortality of the soul, which is mentioned in other parts of Plato, is stated with most advantage in the Phædrus. Cicero, who was highly delighted with this doctrine, gave an account of it in the sixth book of his "Republic,"—a work unfortunately lost. However, he renewed the discussion in the first book of the Tusculan Questions, where the argument is stated in a formal manner. I shall lay before you the substance of it, making only such deviations from the terms themselves, as may be requisite for a more familiar expansion of the meaning of Plato.

The first proof of the immortality of the soul

is drawn from its perpetual motion;* for that which never ceases to move, never ceases to exist. But, in order to secure this permanence of motion, it is also necessary that the motion be derived from the subject itself which moves; —since, if it only receives from another the motion which it exerts or imparts, it must cease to live, as soon as it ceases to be moved from without. It cannot, therefore, be secure against a cessation of its motion, unless it be self-moved; and it is obvious, that a subject, thus independently subsisting, will never withdraw its support from itself, and be the author of its own extinction. Hence it is necessary to the immortality of the soul, that it be not only perpetually, but spontaneously, moved. This being so, it equally follows, that the soul is not only underived, but imperishable. For, that which moves itself, is a principle of motion to other things. But a principle is underived;

* Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἀθάνατος· τὸ γὰρ ἀεικίνητον, ἀθάνατον. Plat. in Phædr. 1221. This is the outset of Plato's argument. Cicero reserves the mention of the soul till he has established the general principle, which he then applies. The first part of his version is adopted by Ficinus. In the latter part, he is content with stating the sense in his own manner.

since, if it were derived from any other, it could not be a principle. If therefore it is not derived from any other, neither can it perish. For, since it is necessary that all things should spring from some principle; if we suppose the principle to be extinct, these two consequences must ensue; neither can the principle itself be revived by any other thing, nor can any other thing be made to spring from the extinct principle. The principle of motion therefore is that which is self-moved; and therefore it possesses the double property of being without origin and without end.* Since then, that appears to be immortal which is self-moved, we may without hesitation affirm, that such is the nature of the soul; for every thing which depends on some external cause for motion, is proved to be inanimate in itself; but that is truly animate, the motion of which is internal and its own. This is the proper quality of the soul; and since the soul has the

* This argument is illustrated by the supposition, that, unless its truth be allowed, the world would perish, the heaven and the earth collapse, and all nature stand still, nor ever again receive an impulse like to that by which it was first set in motion.

power of perpetual and spontaneous motion, it is both underived and imperishable.

Such is the celebrated argument of Plato concerning the principle through which the soul of man is immortal. Cicero admires it so much, that he gives to those who dissent from Plato the opprobrious name of Plebeian philosophers.* He challenges all of them to produce an hypothesis of equal elegance with this: and seems to suspect, that they who do not admit it, are hardly capable of comprehending the subtlety and refinement of its doctrine. As to himself, he seems to place the principal strength of it in the consciousness of the soul. It perceives its own motion.† It perceives,

* Licèt concurrant plebeii omnes philosophi (sic enim ii qui à Platone et Socrate et ab illâ familiâ dissident, appellandi videntur), non modò nihil unquam tam elegantèr explicabunt, sed nè hoc quidem ipsum, quàm subtiliter conclusum sit, intelligent. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. c. 23.

† Sentit animus se moveri; quod cùm sentit, illud unà sentit, se vi suâ, non alienâ, moveri; nec accidere posse, ut ipse unquam à se deseratur; ex quo efficitur æternitas:—nisi quid habes ad hæc. ib. Of course, the auditor is too complaisant to object. All would still have been well, if Cicero had not contrived to draw from him so much personal flattery. Plato is more cautious in this respect.

that this motion is derived from itself, and from no external cause. It is sure therefore, that its own existence can never be deserted by its own will; and hence the conclusion, that it is immortal.

2. From the principle, on which is said to rest the immortality of the soul, let us pass to its history and condition. The first of the three stages of existence lately mentioned, is that which belongs to the soul before its entrance into the body.

In the same dialogue which has furnished us with the argument of immortality, a reference is made to what Plato calls the idea of the soul.* This, it seems, is of too sublime a nature to be described in the manner which would be proper for it. An attempt is therefore made

* Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἰδέας αὐτῆς ὧδε λεκτέον· οἷον μὲν ἐστὶ, πάντῃ πάντως θείας εἶναι καὶ μακρᾶς διηγήσεως· ᾧ δε ἔοικεν, ἀνθρωπίνης τε καὶ ἐλάττονος. In Phædr. p. 1221. There is another such reverential thought in the Republic, lib. x. p. 759. We do not now see the soul in its proper purity. It is clearer and fairer elsewhere than with us. In short, overrun and altered by the contagion of evil, it resembles the body of the marine Glaucus, part of which is bruised by the rocks, and part washed away by the waves: that which remains is covered with an accretion of shells and sea-weed, which prevents us from forming a right notion of the original shape.

to represent it by inferior images, or similitudes of objects familiar to common life. It is supposed then, that for the sake of inspecting the state of the world, the gods leave their seats, and make occasional excursions. These are performed in the celestial chariots of the immortals. Jupiter, the great leader in heaven, is foremost in the progress, and drives his winged chariot, taking care, as he goes, of the order and beauty of all things.* He is followed by the host of gods and demons, arranged in eleven divisions;—for Vesta, the twelfth deity, chooses to stay at home alone. Many and happy are the sights which they enjoy during their journey within the heavens:† but at length they proceed to the extremity. Here the immortal beings take a bold and outer station at the back of heaven, and are carried round till the rotation brings them to the same spot again.‡ It is

* Ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεὺς, πτηνὸν ἅρμα ἐλαύνων πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελόμενος. In Phædr. 1222.

† Πολλαὶ μὲν ὖν καὶ μακάριαι θέαι τε καὶ διέξοδοι ἐντὸς οὐρανοῦ, ἃς θεῶν γένος ἐπιτρέφεται. ib.

‡ Αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀθάνατοι καλόμεναι, ἡνίκα ἂν πρὸς ἄκρῳ γένωνται, ἔξω πορευθεῖσαι ἔστησαν ἐπὶ τῷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ νώτῳ· ἱστάσας δ' αὐτὰς περιάγει ἡ περιφορά· αἱ δὲ θεωροῦσι τὰ ἔξω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. ib.

in the course of this circle that they contemplate the things which are on the outside of heaven. And this being done in a complete manner, (for they see nature, not in the false or imperfect light in which she appears to us, but in the very truth of her being,) they re-enter heaven, and sit down at the banquet prepared for them. The horses being loosed by the charioteer, they are served with nectar and ambrosia. Such, says Plato, is the life of the gods.* But it is the desire of other souls to imitate the actions of the immortals. Those therefore which are destined to enter afterwards into the bodies of men, mount also their chariots, and endeavour to follow the gods in their ascent, and to perform the circle of the heaven in the station before described. But the horses, which are inferior to those of the gods, and of a mixed race, ill obey this wish; and one of them is vicious, and inclines downwards to the earth.†

* Καὶ τ' ἄλλα ὡσαύτως τὰ ὄντως ὄντα θεασαμένη (scil. ἡ θεῦ διάνοια) καὶ ἐστιαθεῖσα, δύσα πάλιν εἰς τὸ εἴσω τῦ ὀρανῦ, οἴκαδε ἦλθεν· ἐλθόσης δὲ ἀντῆς, ὁ ἡνίοχος πρὸς τὴν φάτνην τὸς ἵππυς στήσας, παρέβαλεν ἀμβροσίαν τε καὶ ἐπ' ἀντῇ νέκταρ ἐπότισεν. Καὶ ὅτος μεν θεων βιος. In Phædr. 1222.

† Θεῶν μὲν ὃν ἵπποι τε καὶ ἡνιόχοι πάντες, αὐτοί τε αγαθοὶ καὶ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν· τὸ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων μέμικται·—βρίθει γὰρ ὁ τῆς

Some souls indeed obtain their object better than others, and reach the outer spot, and are carried round with the immortals. But even these are kept in constant alarm by their horses, and with difficulty take notice of the real nature of things as they pass.* Some again, through the virtue of the more tractable horse, lift the head aloft, and see somewhat of the truth: but presently they sink again, and lose the prospect. Others too, in the inordinate struggle of all to gain the upper station, press against one another, and fall into tumult and danger. Many are maimed; and many break their wings and are disabled. Thus are all the souls disappointed of the desired object. They cannot attain a full view of the reality of things, and are obliged to subsist afterwards upon the uncertainty of opinion instead of truth.† Those

κακίας ἵππος μετέχων, ἐπὶ γῆν ῥέπων τε καὶ βαρύνων, ἔνθα δὴ πόνος τε καὶ ἀγὼν ἔσχατος ψυχῇ πρόκειται. ib. 1221-2.

* Ἡ μὲν ἄριστα θεῶν ἑπομένη καὶ εἰκασμένη ὑπῆρεν εἰς τὸν ἔξω τόπον τὴν τοῦ ἡνιόχου κεφαλὴν, καὶ συμπεριηνέχθη τὴν περιφορὰν θορυβουμένη ὑπὸ τῶν ἵππων, καὶ μόγις καθορῶσα τὰ ὄντα· ἡ δὲ τοτὲ μὲν ἦρε, τοτὲ δὲ καὶ ἔδυ· βιαζομένων δὲ τῶν ἵππων, τὰ μὲν εἶδε, τὰ δ' οὔ. ib. 1222.

† Πολλαὶ μὲν χωλεύονται, πολλαὶ δὲ πολλὰ πτερὰ θραύονται· πᾶσαι δὲ πολὺν ἔχουσαι πόνον, ἀτελεῖς τῆς τοῦ ὄντος θέας ἀπέρχονται· καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι τροφῇ δοξαστῇ χρῶνται. In Phædr. 1223.

therefore which are injured, fall down to the earth; and here, in obedience to an impulse of their nature, betake themselves to some body.

The principle of this alliance may be supposed to arise from the original employment of the soul in the upper regions. We see, that, when engaged in the pursuit which has just been described, its natural appetency was to take care of inanimate things;* and hence came its attempt to inspect the condition of the world. When fallen to the earth therefore, it still preserves the desire of governing matter; and hence also comes its immediate occupation of an earthly body. In this it dwells for a time; and man becomes a compound of an immortal

* Ἡ ψυχὴ πᾶσα παντὸς επιμελεῖται τοῦ ἀψύχου· πάντα δὲ οὐρανον περιπολεῖ.—Τελέα μὲν ὖν ὖσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη ΜΕΤΕΩΡΟΠΟΛΕΙ τε καὶ ἅπαντα τὸν κὸσμον διοικεῖ. ib. 1221. The word here marked is an important one with Plato, and expresses the highest speculations of the philosophical soul. In the Apology, Socrates remarks, that he is accused of being τὰ τε μετέωρα φροντιστὴς, καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆν πάντα ανεζητηκως. In the accusation itself, he is said to be busy in prying into τὰ τε ὑπὸ γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐπουράνια. The last term therefore is the meaning of μετεωρα, and accounts for the clouds and basket of Aristophanes. In the Pythagorean school, the word was used in a less honourable sense, for rash and airy fancies.

principle and a mortal frame.* What then is the situation of the soul in man? Plato informs us in the minutest manner, and without any hesitation.

We lately saw, that the inferior gods received from the demiurge the immortal principle of the soul, for the composition of mankind. Nor was it the body alone which they conjoined with this. To the former species of soul they added another which was of a mortal nature, and the seat of many and great passions necessary to the condition of man; pleasure, the incitement to evil; pain, the enemy of happiness; boldness and fear, each unadvised of counsel; anger, hard to be appeased; hope, easy to be persuaded; and other such. But it was necessary to provide, that the divine principle should not be polluted by a commixture with this secondary portion of the soul. The gods therefore placed the former in the head, and the latter in the breast and thorax, keeping them asunder by the dividing isthmus of the neck.† This therefore, which separated their

* Ἡ δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσασα φέρεται, ἕως ἄν τερεῦ τινὸς αντιλάβηται· οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα, σῶμα γήϊνον λαβοῦσα,—ζῶον τὸ ξύμπαν ἐκλήθη, ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα παγὲν. In Phædr. 1221.

† Καὶ διὰ ταῦτα δὴ σεβόμενοι μιαίνειν τὸ θεῖον, ὅτι μὴ πᾶσα

respective abodes, became the channel through which reason might send down her mandates on proper occasions, to the passions below. But man had a still baser sort of desires, an impatience to supply his natural cravings, and a vehement propensity to meats and drinks: and for all such appetites a more remote situation was requisite, on account of the importunity of their disposition, and the disturbance which they might otherwise give to the operations of reason. They were therefore placed

ἣν ἀνάγκη, χωρὶς ἐκείνου κατοικίζουσιν εἰς ἄλλην τοῦ σώματος οἴκησιν τὸ θνητὸν, ἰσθμόν καὶ ὅρον διοικοδομήσαντες τῆς κεφαλῆς καὶ τοῦ στήθους, καὶ ἀυχένα μεταξὺ τιθέντες, ἵνα εἴη χωρὶς· ἐν δὴ τοῖς στήθεσι καὶ τῷ καλουμένῳ θώρακι τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς θνητὸν γένος ἐνέδουν. In Tim. 1073.—In Plato's hands anatomy assumes a moral character. The heart sends notices through the veins to the extremities of the body concerning any outward or inward danger which reason has announced from the head; and thus prepares the sensitive part of man for submission to whatever she may prescribe. And, as the heart itself, in cases of terror and danger, is apt to swell and palpitate, which is the consequence of its fiery nature, the lungs are placed near it for the purpose of affording refreshment and relief to its inordinate heat! Near to the baser appetites, below the diaphragm, is also placed the liver, for the purpose of reflecting from its smooth surface images of terror, which reason may send down from above, and of keeping the wild beast in a tolerable state of quiet! There is much more of this in the same dialogue.

in a lower region, beneath the diaphragm, and towards the umbilicus. This part of the body was judged to be the most proper for the nourishment of the whole man. Here then dwelt the inferior portion of the mortal division of the soul, or rather the third species of soul; and here too it continually fattened, as a confined beast, at its crib or manger.* Such is the circumstantial and authentic account which Plato gives of the situation of the soul in man.

But notwithstanding the desire felt by the soul to occupy mortal bodies in this manner, we are told that it does not enter into them without due preparation. There are certain laws by which the process is governed; and it is expressly provided, that when the soul falls to the earth, it shall not be planted in the body of any brute in the first generation.† Its pri-

* Τὸ δὲ δὴ σίτων τε καὶ ποτῶν ἐπιθυμητικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὅσον ἔνδειαν διὰ τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἔχει φύσιν, τοῦτο εἰς τὰ μεταξὺ τῶν τε φρενῶν καὶ τοῦ πρὸς τὸν ὀμφαλὸν ὅρου κατῴκισαν, οἷον φάτνην ἐν ἅπαντι τούτῳ τῷ τόπῳ τῇ τοῦ σώματος τροφῇ τεκτηνάμενοι, καὶ κατέδησαν δὴ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐνταῦθα, ὡς θρέμμα ἄγριον. In Tim. ib.

† Ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι, μὴ ἴδῃ, καὶ τίνι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη, λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτερυρρυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ, τότε νόμος ταύτην μὴ φυτεῦσαι εἰς μηδεμιᾶν θήρειον φύσιν ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ γενέσει. In

mary destination is the person of man; and the value of the allotment which it there obtains, is made to depend upon its own previous achievements in the upper regions of the world, and the success with which it struggled to view the system of nature and the truth of things. A scale of dignity is therefore drawn by Plato, and the station of the soul in the higher or lower degrees is proportioned to its merits. It is not difficult to conjecture what order of men is placed at the topmost degree of the scale. When a philosopher has to dispense honours, on what shall they be bestowed but philosophy?

The soul then which has followed the immortals in the best manner, or has seen most of the nature of things, is ordered to pass into the composition of one who is to be a philosopher,* or a lover of the καλον. In the next degree is placed a lawful sovereign, or accomplished com-

Phædr. 1223. The commentators are fond of interpreting this chariot-scene as denoting only the struggle of the soul while in the body of man. The last part of the above sentence clearly proves that it is descriptive of the condition of the soul before its entrance into any body.

* Τὴν μὲν πλεῖστα ἰδοῦσαν, εἰς γονὴν ἀνδρὸς γενησομένου φιλοσόφου, ἢ φιλοκάλου. In Phædr. 1223. This too is Indian:—the sovereign is placed immediately below the bramin.

mander. To these succeeds a statesman, or the prudent administrator of domestic affairs. To these, the lover of gymnastic labours, or one who is to be occupied in the cure of diseases incident to the body. The prophetic life, or that which is concerned with initiations into the mysteries, is next in honour. The sixth rank is allotted to poets. The seventh, to geometricians and artificers. The eighth, to sophists, or those who affect popular applause. The lowest degree is reserved for the tyrant. Plato had some reason to take a literary vengeance on the usurpers of the liberties of his country. He studiously degrades them, in comparison with the possessors of lawful sovereignty, who would probably have been placed at the head of the list of dignity, were it not for the homage indispensably due to philosophy.

There are then nine orders of mankind, in which the soul may be primarily placed.*

* The orders and the years seem to have been invented for each other. The same soul might pass through all the orders, a thousand years being allotted to each; and in the tenth stage return to its first situation, in order to begin again the same course of existence! The thousand years allotted to the soul after its possession of each order, is also explained by the tenfold punishment or reward to be received by it after the death of the body. The life of man was therefore taken at an hundred years.

Its subsequent elevation or debasement in other bodies is influenced by its conduct in the first. And to these changes it is subject during ten thousand years, a new life being chosen at the end of every thousand; after which, it returns to the place whence it originally came. There is indeed one exemption in favour of philosophy. By a law of Adraste, the soul which has made the greatest and best discoveries in the region of truth, is excused from so long a probation. It recovers its wings at the end of the third period of a thousand years, if it has acted with sincerity, and after each thousand, has chosen again the philosophic life.* But common souls are subject to one common fate; and it remains to inquire, what becomes of them after they have quitted the body which they first inhabit.

The Phædrus, from which the above account is drawn, alludes only in general terms to the condition of the soul, when it leaves the body. Nor does this subject form any considerable

* Εἰς μὲν γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅθεν ἥκει ἡ ψυχὴ ἑκάστη, οὐ καθικνεῖται ἐτῶν μυριῶν (οὐ γὰρ πτερῶται πρὸ τοσούτου χρόνου) πλὴν ἡ τοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντος ἀδόλως· αὗται δὲ τρίτῃ περιόδῳ τῇ χιλιέτει, ἐαν ἕλωνται τρὶς ἐφεξῆς τὸν βιόν τοῦτον, οὕτω πτερωθεῖσαι, τρισχιλιοστῷ ἔτει ἀπέρχονται. In Phædr. 1223.

part of the vision of the other world granted to the Pamphylian and related in the tenth book of the "Republic." The chief intention of Plato in that curious narrative was to state the manner in which the souls are re-assembled for the purpose of returning to other bodies, and choosing new modes of life.* In the Phædo,

* The soul of the Pamphylian (who was slain in battle) went to the common place of judgment. There were two chasms towards the lower earth; and opposite to them two openings which led to heaven. The judges were placed between both, and sent the souls, when tried, either upwards to heaven on the right, or downwards into the earth on the left. These went to the places of their destination by one of the two chasms in the earth, and one of the openings towards heaven. The other chasm and opening were reserved for the passage of the souls which had formerly lived on earth, had accomplished the interval of a thousand years in their respective places of abode, and returned through them to the spot where they were to choose new modes of life. Schemes of every sort of life—*τὰ τῶν βιών παραδείγματα*, were spread before them on the ground. Sometimes the motives of their choice were whimsical enough. The soul of Ajax, brooding over the old grievance about the arms of Achilles, chose to pass into a lion, shunning the habitations of men who had once injured its feelings by the preference of Ulysses. Orpheus, resenting the treatment of himself by the Thracian women, resolved not to be born again of a female. His soul therefore chose to animate a swan. Thersites, somewhat epigrammatically, became an ape. Ulysses, however, had improved in wisdom. His life was formerly made uneasy by

the destination of the soul, when dislodged by the death of the body, is described with much minuteness and authority; and Socrates founds upon it an earnest recommendation of philosophy; since, at the moment of separation, the soul begins to perceive the consequences of the neglect or attention with which it has treated the true discipline.

There are many paths which lead to the shades below; and Æschylus mistakes, when, through his Telephus, he asserts, that there is but one, and that this is plain.* Hence the necessity of a guide. The demon therefore, who had the care of the man when living, (for every mortal has a superintending demon,†) is charged

the troubles which a too conspicuous station occasioned to him. He therefore chose a lot, which had been neglected by the other souls; and became a private man, unconcerned with business: —*βιόν ἀνδρὸς ἰδιώτου ἀπράγμονος, καὶ μόλις εὑρεῖν κείμενόν που καὶ παρημελημένον ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων*. p. 765.

* *Ἔστι δὲ ἄρα ἡ πορεία οὐχ' ὡς ὁ Αἰσχύλου Τήλεφος λέγει· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ ἁπλῆν οἶμον φησὶν εἰς Ἅδου φέρειν· ἡ δ' οὔτε ἁπλῆ ἔστε μία φαίνεταί μοι εἶναι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἡγεμόνων ἔδει· οὐδὲ γὰρ που τὶς ἄν διαμάρτοι ὁδαμόσε, μιᾶς ὁδοῦ οὔσης. Νῦν δὲ ἔοικε σχίσεις τε καὶ περιόδους πολλὰς ἔχειν*. In Phædon. 80. The ways are numerous only to the place where the judges are. See the note above.

† In what sense this superintendency is to be really under-

to conduct the soul to the spot where others are waiting till they can be judged. But there is a difference of behaviour in the souls as they proceed towards the place of their destination. Those which have acted with soberness and propriety while they were in the body, follow their guides in a decent manner, and without reluctance. In other cases, a struggle ensues. The soul which has been too much pleased with its habitation in the body, is unwilling to go, and therefore uses all its artifice to stay behind;* and hence it happens, that it is sometimes seen lingering about the earth where it

stood, we gather from the Timæus: where the superior part of the soul is said to be every man's demon. Τὸ δὲ δὴ περὶ τοῦ κυριωτάτου παρ' ἡμῖν ψυχῆς εἴδους διανοεῖσθαι δεῖ τῇδε, ὡς ἄρα ἀυτὸ δαίμονα θεὸς ἑκάστῳ δέδωκε τοῦτο, ὅ δὴ φαμὲν οἰκεῖν μὲν ἡμῶν ἐπ' ἄκρῳ τῷ σώματι. p. 1087. But sometimes the demon is reason, and sometimes a person; and Plato, on this as on many other points, is not to be reconciled with himself.

* Ἡ μὲν ὖν κοσμία τε καὶ φρόνιμος ψυχὴ ἕπεται τε καὶ ὐκ ἀγνοεῖ τὰ παρόντα· δὲ ἐπιθυμετικῶς τοῦ σώματος ἔχουσα, περὶ ἐκεῖνο πολὺν χρόνον ἐπτοημένη, καὶ περὶ τὸν ὁρατὸν τόπον πολλὰ ἀντιτείνασα καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα, βίᾳ καὶ μόλις ὑπὸ τοῦ προστεταγμένου δαίμονος οἴχεται ἀγομένη. In Phædon. p. 80. In short, pleasures are the nails which fasten the soul to the body. At the moment of death, therefore, the soul of the voluptuary does not come clean off; and hence it is sometimes gross and visible! A moral solution of ghosts.

had received its gratifications. The demon is therefore obliged to apply force; and at length he succeeds. It happens too, that when a soul, defiled with gross impurities, is brought to the place where other souls are assembled in expectation of their trial, they are struck with horror at its approach, and diligently avoid it.* It therefore wanders about wretched and solitary, without companion or guide, till, after a certain period, it is consigned by Necessity† to the place of its destination. But at length all the souls are tried by the judges Minos, Rhadamanthus and others, and sent to their proper places of punishment or reward. It would be trifling and tedious to repeat the description which Socrates so circumstantially gives of these allotments; and it may suffice to say, that the souls which appear to have conducted themselves with moderation during their possession of the body, and to be but slightly infected with guilt, are sent off to Acheron. Here they are put into boats and arrive at the

* Ταύτην μὲν ἅπας φεύγει τε καὶ ὑπεκτρέπεται, καὶ οὔτε ξυνέμπορος οὔτε ἡγεμὼν ἐθέλει γίγνεσθαι. ib.

† Necessity is the mother of Lachesis, whose orders to the souls, before they return to the world, are given in the 10th book De Repub.

lake, where they reside, and undergo the purgation prescribed for them; nor are they dismissed from thence till they have suffered a proper punishment for every act of injustice, of which they have been guilty. They also receive a due reward for their good actions, as each may appear to deserve.* The other offending souls are divided into two great classes, the curable and the incurable. The latter, stained with the gross and more abominable sins, sacrileges, unjustifiable murders, and the like, are plunged by avenging fate into Tartarus, whence they never escape. They remain there in perpetual punishment.† The former have also been guilty of great offences; but these admit a certain mitigation on account of the circumstances which attend them. Under the impulse of anger, they have forgotten the reverence due to parents; but, for the violence

* Καὶ οἱ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως βεβιωκέναι, πορευθέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Αχέροντα, ἀναβάντες ἃ δὴ ἀυτοῖς ὀχήματα ἐστὶν, ἐπὶ τούτων ἀφικνῶνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην· καὶ ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦσί τε, καὶ καθαιρόμενοι, τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες δίκας, ἀπολύονται, εἴ τις τι ἠδίκησε· τῶν τε ἐνεργεσιῶν τιμὰς φέρονται κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος. In Phædon. p. 84.

† Οἵ δ' ἂν δόξωσιν ἀνιάτως ἔχειν, διὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων,—τούτους δὲ ἡ προσήκουσα μοῖρα ῥίπτει εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον, ὅθὲν ὅποτε ἐκβάινουσιν. ib.

thus committed, they have endeavoured to atone by an increase of attention and respect during the remainder of life; and this saves them from being finally placed among the incorrigible souls. The same is the case with those who, under an evil influence of a similar nature, have been guilty of homicide, and have afterwards laid a better restraint on the passions. It is necessary indeed that they should be plunged into Tartarus;* but after a year passed in this gulph, (into which run all the rivers of hell, and from which they again issue,) they are cast out by the waves into other streams; the homicides, along the Cocytus; those who have injuriously treated their parents, along the Pyriphlegethon. By these they arrive at the Acherusian lake. Here they call aloud on those whom they have slain or injured, and intreat, in a suppliant manner, that they may be permitted to advance, and be received into the lake. If this favour is granted, they come forth, and

* Οἱ δ' ἂν ἰάσιμα μὲν, μεγάλα δὲ δόξωσιν ἡμαρτηκέναι ἁμαρτήματα,—τούτους δὲ ἐμπεσεῖν μὲν εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον ἀνάγκη· ἐμπεσόντας δὲ ἀυτοὺς, καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν ἐκεῖ γενομένους, ἐκβάλλει τὸ κῦμα. ib. This Tartarus is said by Plato to be the Barathrum of Homer and the poets.

Τῆλε μάλ', ἦχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον.

a termination is put to their sufferings. If not, they are hurried back again to Tartarus for a second immersion, and a second ejectment by the same rivers; nor does the repetition of the punishment cease till they are finally pardoned by those whom they have offended. Such is the determination of their judges.*

A different fate awaits those who have distinguished themselves in virtue. The earth, whose lower parts are adapted to the punishment of the wicked, in the manner just described, has also its lofty regions, in which the good receive their happiness. We, says Socrates, inhabit a tract from the Phasis to the Pillars of Hercules. This is but a small and sorry space, in which wretched mortals live, as ants in a collection of dirt, or frogs about a lake.† Nor are any other residences of man better than a nest of cavities, into which is poured a condensation of water, and mist, and air: and these deprive us of the clear sight of celestial objects. Our condition therefore is at present obscure

* Καὶ ταῦτα πάσχοντες οὐ πρότερον πάυονται, πρὶν ἂν πείσωσιν ὅς ἠδίκησαν· αὕτη γὰρ ἡ δίκη ὑπὸ τῶν δικαστῶν αὐτοῖς ἐτάχθη. ib.

† Ἐν σμικρῷ τινὶ μορίῳ, ὥσπερ περὶ τελμα μύρμηκας, ἢ βατράχυς περὶ τὴν θάλατταν οἰκοῦντας. ib. p. 81.

and deceitful, and resembles that of a person, who, in the abyss of the sea, should fancy that he lives on its surface; and seeing the sun and stars through the medium of the water, should take the sea itself for the sky. We too imagine, that, sunk as we are in these depths of earth, we really live upon its surface;* and therefore erroneously give the name of the heaven itself to the air, through which we confusedly behold the heavenly bodies. Nor are we able to correct these mistakes by rising above the lower air, and viewing things in their own purity. This privilege is reserved for the souls which are adjudged to the places situated immediately under the heaven. There the earth shines forth in all the beauty and variety of colour, purple, and gold, and a whiteness surpassing that of gypsum and snow itself.† All its productions too partake of this perfection; and its most

* Ἡμᾶς ὂν οἰκοῦντας ἐν τοῖς κοίλοις αὐτῆς λεληθέναι, καὶ οἴεσθαι ἄνω ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οἰκεῖν· ὥσπερ ἄν εἴ τις ἐν μέσῳ τῷ πυθμένι τοῦ πελάγους οἰκῶν, οἴοιτό τε ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάττης οἰκεῖν, καὶ διὰ τοῦ ὕδατος ὁρῶν τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἄστρα, τὴν θάλατταν ἡγοῖτο οὐρανὸν εἶναι. ib.

† Τὴν μὲν γὰρ, ἀλουργῆ εἶναι, καὶ θαυμαστὴν τὸ κάλλος· τὴν δὲ χρυσοειδῆ· τὴν δὲ, ὅση λευκὴ, γύψου ἢ χιόνος λευκοτέραν. ib. 82.

common stones are those which are so rare, and so much prized amongst us, the sardine, jasper, and smaragdus. With these precious substances, and with gold and silver, is the earth every where adorned.* The inhabitants dwell at ease, whether in inland places, or on the coast, which borders there upon air, as ours does upon the sea; or perhaps on islands projected a little from the continent, and surrounded only by air. In short, air is to them what water is to us; and what we call air, is with them pure æther. There too the seasons perpetually offer a soft and delightful temperature.† No diseases

* Τὴν δὲ γῆν αὐτὴν κεκοσμῆσθαι τούτοις τε ἅπασι, καὶ ἔτι χρυσῷ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις αὖ τοῖς τοιούτοις. ib. Milton has given a pavement of gold to his heaven; but he takes care that it shall be admired by none but a bad spirit.

Mammon, the least erected spirit, that fell
From heaven; for e'en in heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downwards bent, admiring more
The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific.

† Τὰς δὲ ὥρας αὐτοῖς κρᾶσιν ἔχειν τοιαύτην, ὥστε ἐκείνους ἀνόσους εἶναι, καὶ χρόνον τε ζῆν πολὺ πλείω τῶν ἐνθάδε. In Phædon. ib. Homer had created this temperature for Olympus.

——— ὅθι φασὶ θεῶν ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς ἀιεὶ
Ἔμμεναι· οὔτ' ἀνέμοισι τινάσσεται, οὔτε πότ' ὄμβρῳ
Δεύεται, οὔτε χιὼν ἐπιπίλναται· ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἴθρη

afflict the happy inhabitants, whose life is therefore much longer than ours. Their senses too, as well as their knowledge and the qualities of their mind, excel ours as much as our air is excelled by their æther in purity. There also are the groves and temples of the gods; and in these effectively reside the gods themselves, who by voices, divinations, and sensible tokens of their presence, hold frequent communication with the favoured inhabitants.* These therefore see the sun, and moon, and stars in their true nature; and all their happiness is answerable to this near and more perfect observation of things. To places thus beautiful and thus inhabited, are sent the virtuous souls. They rise above our mortal habitations, which are no other than pits or prisons, and ascend to a purer abode on the true and proper surface of the earth. But a privilege still higher than this awaits the souls which have philosophized in a sufficient manner. They are transplanted to other abodes yet more beautiful, where they

Πέπταται ἀννέφελος, λευκὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν αἴγλη·
Τῷ ἔνι τέρπονται μάκαρες θεοὶ ἤματα πάντα. Odyss. 6.

* Καὶ δὴ καὶ θεῶν ἄλση τε καὶ ἱερὰ αὐτοῖς εἶναι· ἐν οἷς τῷ ὄντι οἰκητὰς θεὸς εἶναι, καὶ φήμας τε καὶ μαντείας καὶ αἰσθήσεις τῶν θεῶν. In Phædon. ib.

live afterwards without bodies;* while the rest are doomed to return to the world after the completion of a thousand years.

The doctrine of Plato has now been reviewed in the manner proposed.† We have seen the nature of his opinions, first, concerning the Deity, and secondly, concerning the immortality of the soul.

The inferences proper to be drawn from both these points shall be laid before you in the same order.

1. In the course of the first argument it was incidentally stated, that the agency of the demiurge, which some have incautiously termed a Creation, was no more than a formation of præexisting and eternal matter. This is a point, which, on account of its great importance, deserves the particular attention of those who compare the theology of Paganism with Revelation. The Platonic world could not be produced without the concurrence of three separate principles,—a labouring deity,—eternal, reluctant, and untractable matter,—and rational and

* Τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ φιλοσοφιᾷ ἱκανῶς καθῃρᾶμενοι, ἄνευ τε σωμάτων ζῶσι τὸ παράπαν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, καὶ εἰς οἰκήσεις ἔτι τούτων καλλίους ἀφικνοῦνται. ib. p. 84.

† Page 221.

self-subsisting ideas, or original exemplars, according to which, things were to be framed, and from which they were also to derive their essence.* The task of the deity was therefore a difficult one. The blind and brute irregularity inherent in the nature of matter, crossed his designs, frustrated much of the good which he intended for the universe, and was the cause of evil.† And this probably is the circumstance which led Plato to observe, though in a manner neither pious nor philosophical, the elation of mind which was felt by his demiurge,‡ when

* Sequitur per ideas, non abstractiones mentis nostræ, vel notiones universales intelligendas esse, sed entia intelligibilia, in Deo radicata, sive ratione divinâ, velut mundo suo, comprehensa, quæ per se existunt, et materiæ modificatæ non characteres tantùm essentiales, sed ipsam quoque essentiam largiuntur. Per. 1. part. post. lib. ii. c. 6. s. 1. § 15.

† Inesse materiæ necessariam et innatam cupiditatem, sive brutam et cæcam vim quandam, quæ inordinatè eam moveat, quæque in causâ sit, ut nec optima omnia Deus facere potuerit, et mala indè omnia oriantur. ib. § 14.

‡ Augustin compares this with the sentence of Moses,—"God saw that it was good;" and observes that the Creator merely declares the excellence of his work. He is not obliged to wait for its completion till he can ascertain his success;—Docet bonum esse, non discit. Plato quidem plus ausus est dicere, elatum esse scilicet Deum gaudio, mundi universitate perfectâ. Civ. Dei, lib. xi. c. 21.

he saw his labours followed with so much success in the beautiful appearance of things. In short, we see his deity operate, as a mortal of extraordinary genius, on the materials which are at hand. He is an Archimedes, of an higher class.

But the imperfection which thus attaches to the theology of Plato, is chargeable to Paganism in general. This has been ascertained with equal research and judgment by the learned Mosheim in his treatise on the "Creation of the World from Nothing:" of which, some short notice may be useful.

His purpose is then, not to inquire, whether the doctrine of a proper creation be discoverable by the force of human reason. He does not ask, whether the happy application of an extraordinary sagacity might arrive at such a conclusion. Indeed, it is remarkable, that some of the highest names in philosophy have deemed the strictest notion of creation to contain nothing repugnant to right reason. Such has been the judgment of Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke.* But the question is, whether the

* Eximii duo viri, quibus nihil majus est inter philosophos ætatis nostræ, Jo. Lockius et Is. Newtonus, non modò negant, creationem mundi rationi purgatæ adversari, sed etiam fieri

doctrine be really taught in any of the books which have descended to us from the Pagan ages. This is determined by Mosheim in the negative. In the first part of his treatise he states the argument, and examines certain passages of Aristotle, Empedocles, and Seneca, which have been supposed to convey the doctrine: and those who are ready to ascribe a proper creation to the Gods of heathenism, on account of a few strong expressions which will be occasionally found in Pagan writers even of the laxest character, will do well to study this part of the treatise with attention. They will not fail to see, how little strictness of meaning may belong to phrases of great apparent force, and on how many occasions the sense that has been hastily attributed to particular words is weakened or destroyed by the general nature of the reasoning amidst which they are found. He next examines the early systems of the Grecian sects and sages, and finds in those which are

posse contendunt, ut modum ejus comprehendamus aliquâ ratione, si vulgarium sententiarum vinculis nos expedire conemur. C. 5. This may afford another proof, that certain truths of Revelation may be found not unacceptable to that reason which would have been wholly incompetent to make the first discovery of them.

supposed to precede the age of Plato, no higher meaning, than that order and beauty were produced out of matter which before had been subject to no rules. Of the poems of Orpheus* (the supposed Father of the Grecian theology) he justly pronounces, that the doctrine is not only not that of the Scriptures, but that it is of a low and impious character. Its real meaning is, that the deity is the universe,† and that this proceeds from him in such a manner, that the parts of the universe are no other than parts of the Divine nature, the limbs, as it were, of the great body of Deity. And this is little else than the flagitious doctrine which so long

* It is generally allowed that the antient Orpheus did not write the poems to which his name is affixed:—Antiquum illum Orpheum nihil horum scripsisse, cum plerisque scio. This is the confession of his editor and admirer Eschenbachius, who seems however to take no small pride in having studied these venerable and mysterious writings by night!—Silente mundo, solis vigilantibus astris et lunâ. While some have extolled the poems as an invaluable treasure of theology, others have pronounced them to be the "liturgy of Satan."

† Deum esse omnia canit, et à Deo ita fluxisse omnia putat, ut partes hujus universitatis membra tantùm et partes divinæ naturæ non desinant esse. Tantum abest, ut Orpheus ille, quisquis demum fuerit, cum Christianis sensisse putandus sit, ut potiùs à Spinosæ flagitiis exiguo aut nullo intervallo remotus fuisse videatur. De Creat. Mund. c. 10.

afterwards shocked mankind in the system of Spinosa.

The well-known passage of Hesiod is next produced, in which, according to the general sense of the commentators, is stated the original existence of a Chaos.* But this also has been supposed to teach the doctrine of creation; and Hesiod, as well as Plato, is supposed by some to have drawn this great truth from Egypt. But it is well observed, that, whatever may be fondly attributed to a single expression, the general meanness of Hesiod's theology is against so favourable an interpretation. His highest god is Jupiter, of whom he has no objection to relate the degrading stories commonly received by Paganism: nor can it be reasonably concluded that, with such a being for his prime deity, his meaning on the point in question is, in any respect, superior to that of Ovid. From Pythagoras descended some of the philosophy which was adopted by Plato; but for him also was invented by his admirers, the detestable

* Ἤτοι μὲν πρώτιστα Χάος γένετ'.—Ecquis est, qui sibi persuadere queat, vatem apertè adversùs Deum impium, et tam puerili religione imbutum, ut hominem ex Saturno et Rheâ genitum omnibus præficeret, de materiæ initio et creatione piè ac sapientèr sensisse? ib. c. 11.

doctrine, that singularity, or the Deity, passed into duality, or matter, and produced the world! Thus, while they endeavoured to prove, that the Deity was the author of matter, they made the Deity and matter to be the same substance, or to have the same properties!*

We need not dwell on the judgment which Mosheim passes on Plato himself, since the substance of this has already appeared, nor on his rejection of the claims which have been made in favour of the barbarous nations.† The most curious part of the treatise perhaps is the last, in which he relates the gradual corruption of the doctrine of Plato by the sophistries of the Alexandrian school.

Plato, intent on providing for the being of One, denied existence, in a proper sense, to other things. To all matter therefore, whether devoid of qualities in itself, or endued with them and formed into visible bodies, he gave the name of NOTHING; in which extensive sense he

* Scilicet apertè confitentur, qui sic sentiunt, mundum esse Deum, nec præter mundum et materiam divinum aliquid esse. ib. c. 13.

† The Egyptians, Chinese, Japanese, Indians, Phœnicians, Persians, and Etruscans.

is interpreted by Cicero.* On this the junior Platonics grafted their refinements, for the sake of producing a doctrine which should look like that of the Scriptures. They therefore restricted the name of "Nothing" to that abstract or ideal matter which possessed neither forms nor qualities.† And hence they affirmed that the world was formed by the demiurge from nothing; that is, from darkness, or that visionary matter which was regarded as nothing. Again, Plato had openly taught the eternity of the world, and, by consequence, had degraded his deity. This therefore was understood by the junior Platonics in a metaphysical sense which was to protect Plato and his deity together. Hence it became one of the leading maxims of the school to resolve the eternity of the world into the mind of the Deity, to connect the universe with him by an eternal flux of generation, and to make it derive all its contrivance from that process. Accordingly, it was argued, that as

* Nihil Plato putat esse quod oriatur et intereat, idque solum esse, quod semper tale sit, qualem ideam appellat ille, nos speciem. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. c. 24.

† Plotinus de materiâ hâc informi, quam sola mens videt ac contemplatur: ὕλη, inquit, μὴ ὄν ἂν ἐικότως λέγοιτο. De Creat. Mund. c. 19.

body is the cause of the shade which falls from it, so the eternity of the Deity is the cause of the eternity of the world. The shade is equal with the body in point of time, though not of honour. In the same manner, the world follows the Deity. Though caused by him, and therefore in that sense not of equal dignity, yet it is co-eternal with him. It is an eternal effect from an eternal cause, an eternal ray from an eternal sun,* the primitive footstep of the primitive foot. By such subtleties as these was it attempted to rescue Platonism from the imputations cast upon it by the orthodox Christians; and thus was a forced reconciliation effected between two opinions which must be for ever opposite,—the eternity of the world, and the creation of it from nothing!

From the Scriptures alone then is the doctrine of a proper creation to be learnt,—a creation, as Eusebius observes, not only of the form which is impressed upon bodies, but of the primary matter of their composition, or the

* Itaque cùm mundum æquè negant Platonici æternum esse, atque Deum, huc eorum unicè redit sententia: "Mundum ex omni æternitate sine ullo principio de Deo tanquàm de causâ et de auctore suo fluxisse, quemadmodum de æterno corpore æterna umbra, aut de perenni sole perennis radius." ib. c. 31.

Ὕλη of the Greeks.* This, he says, is the head and fountain of the true theology—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Nor is the truth of this doctrine made to rest on the force of any single expression; it is the obvious and incontrovertible meaning of Revelation at large; and our common reason is violated by any attempt to dispute it. For a more ample proof of this important point, I would refer you to the twelfth sermon of Barrow on the Apostles' Creed. For our present purpose, a very few passages of Scripture will suffice. In this absolute sense, the prophet Jeremiah contrasts the power of the God of Israel with the false pretensions of the idols of the Heathen. "The gods that have not made the heaven and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power; He hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his discretion."† The same is the language of other prophets: and it is worth

* Τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν δογμάτων ἴδιον ἦν, τὸ ἕνα τῶν ἁπάντων ποιητὴν νομίζεσθαι τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸν, αὐτῆς τε τῆς ὑποκειμένης τοῖς σώμασιν οὐσίας, ἣν Ὕλην προσαγορεύουσιν Ἕλληνες. Præp. Evang. lib. vii. c. 18. Compare ib. c. 11.

† C. x. 11, 12.

our while to observe, from a passage in one of the books of Maccabees, that,* after inspiration had ceased, the Jewish people retained the original meaning of creation—"I beseech thee, my son, look upon the heaven, and the earth, and all that is therein, and consider, that God made them of things that were not; and so was mankind made likewise." In this sense is the doctrine of creation constantly mentioned in the Gospel; and in the same manner was it interpreted by the general agreement of the early Church, into which none were admitted who did not openly profess it.† "By him (says St. Paul) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible." And not only does he affirm them to

* 2 Macc. vii. 28.

† Viguit præceptum hoc in ipso statim Christianæ libertatis exordio, nec in cœtum sanctiorem receptus tum fuit aliquis, nisi qui publicè profiteretur, Deum unicum rerum omnium, et ipsius etiam materiæ ex quâ constant omnia, parentem et conditorem esse. De Creat. Mund. c. 1. The last circumstance was insisted upon in opposition to the false creation of the Greeks. Indeed, our Creeds are in a great measure defensive. Much of them has arisen from the necessity of counteracting the doctrines of philosophy and heresy; and these articles may sometimes be usefully traced up to the errors which they were originally intended to correct.

be created "by him," but "for him;"* and hence, God is the final disposer, because he is the original Creator, of all things. With the same great and fundamental truth begins the Apostles' Creed—"I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." Omnipotence being first asserted in a strict sense, creation is its proper consequence, and must have been supposed, even if it were not formally expressed. Such then is the full and exact meaning which we are required to affix to this sentence whenever we repeat it; a meaning which was never taught by any of the loftiest religions of nature, and is utterly irreconcileable with the imperfect powers of the deity of Plato. And such is the decision of the judicious and sagacious Barrow. "From these premises we may conclude, against those philosophers, who, destitute of the light of revelation, did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians, who have followed the philosophers (as Hermogenes of old, and Volkelius of late, together with the sectators of their opinions) that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create) that is, either

* Col. i. 16.

immediately, or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence upon every thing which is, not excepting any one. And that is the sense of the words, having *made heaven and earth;* or of the title, *Maker of heaven and earth,* ascribed unto God."*

* Sermon 12. ib.—The early belief of the Church in this point is seen even in the erroneous supposition of some Christian writers, that the antient Heathens had taught it too. What excuse may be made for those modern critics who have favoured the orthodoxy of the Pagan cosmologists, I know not. The mistake of the early writers of the Church arose in a great measure from their Christian zeal. Eager to win the fastidious and infidel Greeks to the Gospel, they endeavoured to prove to them, that the sentiments of their ancestors came near to the standard of Scripture; and hence the forced and injudicious attempts to reconcile things so dissimilar; and to extract from the idolatrous books the doctrine of a proper creation and the Unity of the Deity. Who, for instance, would suppose, that proofs of these points were to be sought for in Sophocles, Æschylus, Philemon, or Menander? Yet the treatise of Justin Martyr "De Monarchia" abounds with them. The following lines are quoted from Sophocles, though they do not occur in any of the plays that are extant, nor is it easy to suppose that they were written by him:—

Εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστὶν Θεὸς,
Ὃς οὐρανόν τ' ἔτευξε, καὶ γαῖαν μακρὰν,
Πόντου τε χαροπὸν οἶδμα, κἀνέμων βίας.
Θνητοὶ δὲ πολλοὶ καρδίαν πλανώμενοι,
Ἱδρυσάμεσθα πημάτων παραψυχὰς

I have dwelt the longer on this, because it is the cardinal point of all religion: for, from a strict and absolute creation by an Almighty Being, properly flow the Divine dominion over the world, the present dispensations of Providence and the future judgment of men. And from the necessary reference of all these powers to the same Being, our Creator, Preserver, and Judge, results the necessity of the sole worship of the Godhead. This leads us to another important point.

That there must be an independent and primary cause of things, and that it must have an existence essential and peculiar to itself; that this Being is both eternal and infinite, and is necessarily perfect; that there can be only one Being possessed of those peculiar properties, and that all other things depend on him for

Θεῶν ἀγάλματ' ἐκ λίθων, ἢ χαλκέων,
Ἢ χρυσοτεύκτων, ἢ ἐλεφαντίνων τύπους·
Θυσίας τε τούτοις, καὶ καλὰς πανηγύρεις
Τεύχοντες, ὅτως εὐσεβεῖν νομίζομεν.

Just. Mart. ib.

The observations of Potter on this passage, which are in Hutchins's edition of Justin's treatise, may be compared with those of Bentley and Jortin; Remarks on Eccl. History, vol. i. p. 330. Ed. 1805.

their existence; that this Being is God; that God is a Spirit; that therefore the Universe, or general sum of things, cannot share any portion of divinity with him; and that he is the proper and sole object of worship;—these, I say, are discoveries which the common reason of man has been supposed capable of making by its own efforts, and without the suggestion of Divine revelation. But we may now securely ask, in the practice of what Pagan nation is this supposition to be proved? In the doctrines of what Pagan philosopher can its truth be clearly established? We have seen, that, in consequence of the imperfection of the deity of Plato, his original want of creative power, and the failure of his providence which necessarily resulted from it, the inferior deities were also the objects of worship in the system of that philosopher. Notwithstanding this, a regular attempt to prove the claims of natural religion has been made by our own Wollaston. Yet it is not his object to discredit Revelation. He rather professes to recommend it by a preparatory statement of favourable conclusions drawn from the human understanding. His fundamental principle is truth; from a conformity or disagreement with which, springs moral good or evil.

Coincident with truth are reason and happiness; and subservient to it is sense, or reason, or both. Hence he professes to deduce the law of nature, which contains the knowledge of the truths relating to God, to ourselves, and to the rest of mankind. But, notwithstanding all his efforts on the side of unassisted reason, Wollaston could not descend to the level of nature. He was too well instructed by Christianity not to feel its influence even against his own purpose. He endeavours to exclude a light which continues to shine inwardly on his mind. In vain he professes "only to shew, what a heathen philosopher, without any other help and almost αὐτοδίδακτος may be supposed to think."* The suggestions of his reason are tinged with revelation, and the standard which he establishes for the religion of nature is of an height which Plato never reached.

From the creation of man then, properly understood, results the exclusion of secondary Deities, and the necessary worship of God alone. Hence too is derived another important conclusion. Man is not abandoned by the Deity; nor left the sport of mediating demons. His redemp-

* Religion of Nature delineated. Sect. 9.

tion is the work of the same God. The Platonic philosophy is too apt to mix itself with those descriptions which some of the early fathers have given of certain doctrines of the Scripture; but the following statement by Augustin may be sufficient to shew his notion of the principle of the mediation of Christ, the highest act of Providence towards mankind. "Man, as he is mortal, is miserable. In order, therefore, to raise him to that immortality which he cannot attain by his nature, a mediator is required. He must be both God and man: but being God, and submitting to the condition of man, he cannot forfeit any portion of his proper and inherent divinity. Neither can he continue mortal. On this plan, therefore, was effected an union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ. His temporary mortality connected him with the creatures whom he came to save. His everlasting godhead gave effect to his assumed manhood. His condescension is transitory: but the consequences of it to man are eternal. The resurrection of Christ from the dead is the first fruit of his mediation, and the pledge of immortality, both in body and soul, to those who, without it, must have re-

mained the victims of eternal death."* It is evident, that the terms employed in this statement are partly direct, and partly allusive to that false and incongruous mediation of the Platonic demons, which has been already described. Our redemption is defined both by what it is, and what it is not: but the aim of the whole is, to reconcile the natural mortality of man with the promise of the "life that is to come," and to direct our religious gratitude to its proper object, the mercy of God, and his free grace to us in Jesus Christ.

2. This promise leads us to a reflection on

* Si omnes homines, quamdiu mortales sunt, etiam miseri sint necesse est, quærendus est medius, qui non solùm homo, verùm etiam Deus sit: ut homines ex mortali miseriâ ad beatam immortalitatem hujus medii beata mortalitas interveniendo perducat; quem neque non fieri mortalem oportebat, neque permanere mortalem. Mortalis quippe factus est, non infirmatâ VERBI divinitate, sed carnis infirmitate susceptâ. Non autem permansit in ipsâ carne mortalis, quam resuscitavit à mortuis; quoniam ipse fructus est mediationis ejus, ut nec ipsi, propter quos liberandos mediator effectus est, in perpetuâ vel carnis morte remanerent. Proindè MEDIATOREM inter nos et Deum, et mortalitatem habere oportuit transeuntem, et beatitudinem permanentem; ut per id quod transit, congrueret morituris, et ad id quod permanet, transferret ex mortuis. Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 15.

the second part of the doctrine of Plato. With him, the body was not deemed worthy of any consideration. It was, as we have seen, borrowed for a while by the inferior deities from the elements, and was to be restored to them again. The immortality, of which he speaks, is attributed only to the soul. A few words will be sufficient to shew the folly, or the malice of those who have so zealously extolled this doctrine, as maintaining a rivalship with that of Revelation.

It appears, that the world was the primary object of solicitude to the Demiurge: and that man was no more than one of its component parts.* He was made, not after the image of God, but after the pattern of the world; and hence he has been termed a microcosm. Accordingly, when the Demiurge gave to the inferior gods the soul which was to be placed in man, he took it from the residuum of the soul of the world: it is therefore secondary to this both in time and importance. Yet we find Plato asserting, that the soul of man is an original principle,

* Πάντα ταῦτα (i. e. the Chaotic mass) πρῶτον διεκόσμησεν, ἔπειτα ἐκ τούτων πᾶν τόδε ξυνεστήσατο, ζῷον ἕν, ζῶα ἔχον ἁπάντα ἐν αὐτῷ. In Tim. p. 1073.

and that it is possessed of an eternity essential to itself. Here then no reference is made to the will of any superior power; but the soul is declared to have the high and distinctive privilege of self-motion;—and hence is inferred its self-existence. It follows, therefore, either that Plato does not, in fact, acknowledge a deity, but makes the soul the first principle of all things; or that his deity, and the soul of man are one and the same thing! In either case the doctrine is vicious; it is self-contradictory, or impious; or both.

But let us wave this imputation, and inquire of what nature is the immortality which Plato attributes to the soul. Contraries, says Socrates, spring from each other;* and both are produced by a continual interchange of intermediate properties. The bond between these contraries is increase and decay; and by means of this agency, are effected separation and mixture, heat and cold, and the like. This is applicable to the condition of the soul. The opposite of death is life, as waking is of sleep. That death succeeds to life is most evident. In like man-

* Ἱκανῶς ἂν ἔχομεν τοῦτο, ὅτι πάντα οὕτω γίγνεται ἐξ ἐναντίων τὰ ἐναντία πράγματα. In Phædon. p. 53.

ner, therefore, it is to be concluded that life succeeds also to death. The soul, therefore, exists somewhere, and expects its return to another body, from which it is again to be dislodged by dissolution! But it is obvious, that this is no more than a physical round of eternity; and if the soul is immortal, it is so on the same principle with the elements, or the material substances of nature, which are gradually decomposed, and formed again. The change of things is perpetual; but the sum of them remains. Augustin has bestowed a just reprobation on the baseness of that theology which will not allow the soul to continue in the happiness once bestowed upon it;* which delivers it

* He pities the soul—euntem sine cessatione ad falsam beatitudinem, et ad veram miseriam sine cessatione redeuntem. Civ. Dei, lib. xii. c. 13. Compare c. 20. Augustin informs us too, that Porphyry, one of the most celebrated followers of Plato, was offended with this doctrine, and expressly disavowed it:—De istis circumitibus et sine cessatione alternantibus itionibus et reditionibus animarum, Porphyrius Platonicus suorum opinionem sequi noluit, sive ipsius rei vanitate permotus, sive jam tempora Christiana reveritus. ib. In another curious passage, which he quotes from Varro, some who cast nativities at Rome, are said to have maintained that it was necessary for the same soul and the same body to meet again upon earth, and to live as they had before; and that this would actually

from the body, only to subject it to a repetition of the same constraint and misery after a certain interval. But Ovid, who never troubles himself with objections to any principles, has sung this circular philosophy in his most happy manner:—

> Nec perit in tanto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo;
> Sed variat, faciémque novat;—nascíque vocatur
> Incipere esse aliud, quàm quod fuit antè; moríque
> Desinere illud idem: cùm sint huc forsitan illa,
> Hæc translata illuc; summa tamen OMNIA constant.
>
> Met. lib. 15.

How different the language of Revelation! The body and the soul of man are equally the creation of God. They are together governed by his Providence, and together subject to his future judgment. The soul is immortal, not through any independent or self-subsisting pro-

take place after an interval of 440 years!—Genethliaci quidem scripserunt, esse in renascendis hominibus quum appellant παλιγγενεσίαν Græci: hanc scripserunt confici in annis numero quadringentis quadraginta, ut idem corpus et eadem anima, quæ fuerant conjuncta in homine aliquando, eadem rursus redeant in conjunctionem. ib. lib. xxii. c. 28. In the same chapter he exposes the absurdity of those who upon loose hints of this nature founded an argument, that the Pagans had anticipated the doctrine of the Resurrection.

perties, but through the nature conferred upon it by its Maker, and continued by his preserving power. It is placed in the body, which it guides in righteousness, according to the suggestions of the Holy Spirit. When the body dies, the soul does not sleep with it in the dust of the earth, but returns to God who gave it. At the last day, it shall be finally joined again with its body. This was mortal, but is now glorified for eternity by that Power, which is "able to subdue all things to itself;" and both together shall receive the reward of immortal happiness, promised to the faith and obedience of man through Jesus Christ.

I will add no more to this part of the subject, but will close the whole with an observation which may be applied to a very large portion of the Pagan writings.

Plato, who has had so many followers ready to answer for the truth of his doctrine, would not answer for it himself. When Timæus is about to deliver his opinion concerning the Demiurge, and the production of the world, he remarks the various and contradictory opinions which were entertained on those important subjects, and the impossibility of ascertaining the truth with exactness. For himself, therefore,

he claims no higher credit, than that his system is perhaps as probable as that of any other.* This reservation is strongly applauded by Socrates. It is repeatedly expressed, and finally applied to the doctrine of the soul. If some god shall undertake to declare its condition, the truth will be infallibly known:† but till that happens, conjecture, founded on probability, is all that man can hope to attain

Another instance drawn from the Phædo, beautifully proves how little certainty was supposed to belong to this philosophy.

Socrates had employed some of his choicest

* Ἐὰν ἄρα μηδενὸς ἧττον παρεχώμεθα εἰκότας (λόγους) ἀγαπᾶν χρή· μεμνημένον ὡς ὁ λέγων, ὑμεῖς τε οἱ κριταὶ, φύσιν ἀνθρωπίνην ἔχομεν· ὥστε περὶ τούτων τὸν εἰκότα μῦθον ἀποδεχομένου πρέπει μηδὲν ἔτι πέρα ζητεῖν. In Tim. p. 1047.

† Τὰ μὲν ὖν περὶ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅσον θνητὸν ἔχει καὶ ὅσον θεῖον, καὶ ὅπη, καὶ μεθ' ὧν, καὶ δι' ἃ χωρὶς ᾠκισθη, τὸ μὲν ἀληθὲς (ὡς ἔιρηταν) θεῦ ξυμφήσαντος, τότ' ἂν ὅτω μόνως διϊσχυρίζοιμεθα· τὸ γε μὴν εἰκὸς ἡμῖν εἰρῆσθαι, καὶ νῦν καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον ἀνασκοπῦσι διακινδυνευτέον φαναι, καὶ πεφάσθω. ib. p. 1075.

This is the manner of Plato, and it ought to be carefully observed by all his readers. His account of the sublimest and most abstruse subjects is circumstantial and positive. The only guard against too implicit a credit in it is to be found in these incidental warnings.

reasoning on the immortality of the soul, and apparently convinced his friends by arguments derived from the necessary succession of life to death, from the nature and powers of memory, and from the soul's essential simplicity. But one of them ventures to express a fear, lest the soul may perish when the body is dissolved, just as harmony perishes when the lyre is broken.* To this another adds, that though the soul may not perish immediately, yet probably it will not continue for ever. When the first body is dead, it may return to animate another and another; but after several generations, it will itself expire. A succession of vestments will wear out the body, which decays before the last is threadbare. And in the same manner, a succession of bodies will perhaps wear out the soul, though, in its own nature, the soul be more durable than a single body.

These little objections are sufficient to remove all the impression which the ingenuity of

* 'Ει ὂν τυγχάνῃ ἡ ψυχὴ ὅσα ἁρμονία τις, δῆλον ὅτι ὅταν χαλασθῇ τὸ σῶμα ἡμῶν ἀμέτρως, ἢ ἐπιταθῇ ὑπὸ νόσων, καὶ ἄλλων κακῶν, τὴν μὲν ψυχὴν ἀνάγκη ἐνθὺς ὑπάρχει ἀπολωλέναι (καίπερ ὅσαν θειοτάτην) ὥσπερ καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι ἁρμονίαι, αἵ τ' ἐν τοῖς φθόγγοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς τῶν δημιουργῶν ἔργοις πᾶσι.' In Phædon. p. 65.

Socrates had made on his hearers;* and in a moment the strong fears of nature in their bosoms triumph over a reasoning confessedly uncertain, and drawing its best support from probability alone. Cicero, who frequently employs a sentiment of Plato in a manner of his own, seems to have remembered this passage in the first book of the Tusculan Questions. When he exhorts his friend to read the Phædo, if he wishes to obtain a knowledge of the immortality of the soul; "I have frequently read it," replies he; "but I know not how it happens; while I read, the arguments of Plato have my concurrence; but when I lay down the book and revolve the subject in my mind, my late assent is presently withdrawn, and all my disbelief returns."† This is the genuine

* Πάντες ἓν ἀκήσαντες εἰπόντῶν ἀυτῶν, ἀηδῶς διετέθημεν, ὡς ὕστερον ἐλέγομεν πρὸς ἀλλήλους, ὅτι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔμπροσθεν λόγου σφόδρα πεπεισμένους ἡμᾶς, πάλιν ἐδόκουν ἀναταράξαι καὶ εἰς ἀπιστίαν καταβαλεῖν, ὁ μόνον τοῖς προειρημένοις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὰ ὕστερα μέλλοντα ῥηθήσεσθαι, μὴ ὀδενὸς ἄξιοι εἴημεν κριταὶ, ἢ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἀυτὰ ἄπιστα ᾖ. ib. p. 66.

† Evolve diligentèr ejus eum librum qui est de Animo. Ampliùs quod desideres, nihil erit. Feci meherculè, et quidem sæpiùs; sed nesico quo modo, dum lego, assentior; cùm posui librum, et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cœpi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. c. 11.

voice of nature confessing her fears under the want of sufficient evidence concerning a future state.

This too, I believe, is the meaning of Virgil, when he closes his description of the nether world, and dismisses Æneas through the ivory gate:—

> Sunt geminæ somni portæ; quarum altera fertur
> Cornea, quâ veris facilis datur exitus umbris:
> Altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto:
> Sed falsa ad cœlum mittunt insomnia manes.
> His ibi tum natum Anchises unàque Sybillam
> Prosequitur dictis, portâque emittit eburnâ.

It was, as we have seen, the character of the philosophy, from which Virgil has borrowed so many of the incidents of this book, to confess its want of confidence in the speculations which it indulged on the nature and future condition of the soul. He remembers this caution, and will not dismiss his description without it. To the imagery, therefore, which he adopts from Homer, he adds another purpose;* and the

* Nothing can be more natural than the use of this imagery by Penelope relating her dream, Odyss. lib. 19. In Virgil, it appears forced, unless some other purpose can be coupled with it. Cicero takes care to state the customary precaution before

ivory gate may be regarded as a poetic conveyance of the uncertainty confessed by Plato concerning the "life to come."

he enters on a subject so difficult, and remote from the common knowledge of mankind.—Ea quæ vis, ut potero, explicabo: nec tamen, quasi Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint, et fixa quæ dixero; sed ut homunculus unus è multis, probabilia conjecturâ sequens. Ultra enim quo progrediar, quàm ut verisimilia videam, non habeo. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i. c. 9.

In the text, the question is concerning the sentiments of Plato on the subject of God and the soul. A general view of the absurd and contradictory sentiments of the Pagan schools at large, on these important points, is given in the neat and pleasing treatise of Hermias—Διασυρμὸς—or Irrisio Philosophorum. He begins with the soul, but is utterly at a loss what to determine concerning it from the definitions of the philosophers; whether it be fire, air, or motion,—whether it be intelligence, or nothing but an exhalation. Some describe it as a power derived from the stars; and some call it an additional essence, the result of the four elements compounded. One calls it harmony,—one, the blood,—one, the breath of man,—and another, a monad. These contests concerning the nature of the soul are a sure pledge of differences as to its duration. "For a moment, (says he,) I fancy myself immortal; but this illusion is presently dissolved by one who maintains, that my soul is as subject to death as my body. Another is determined to preserve its existence during 3000 years. I pass into other bodies, and become a beast or a fish; nor is it possible for me to call myself by any determinate name. I am a wolf, a bird, a serpent, a chimæra. I swim,

I fly, I creep, I run, I sit still, and am made to partake of all opposite conditions in rotation."—He indulges the same vein of humour on the disputes about God and nature; and describes the fluctuation of his mind under the successive tuition of a number of Pagan masters, each teaching him a different lesson. "Anaxagoras tells me that all things are derived from an intelligent mind, the cause of order, motion, and beauty. In this I should acquiesce, if Melissus and Parmenides did not object, who contend both in verse and prose, that the universe is ONE, self-subsisting, eternal, infinite, immoveable, and unchangeable. Awed therefore, by this double authority, I begin to drop my attachment to Anaxagoras. Yet neither do I rest with Melissus and Parmenides; for Anaximenes now proves to me that all things are produced from air. I begin, therefore, to lean towards his philosophy; but on a sudden I hear a voice calling to me out of Etna, and commanding me to believe that the system of the world arose from the collision of love and hatred, by whose operation alone can be satisfactorily explained the existence of things similar and dissimilar, finite and infinite. Thanks to you, Empedocles, and in gratitude for so important a discovery, I am ready to follow you, even into the crater of your volcano;" &c. He passes rapidly through a number of other systems, the heat and cold of Archelaus,—the god, matter, and ideas of Plato,—the active and passive principles of Aristotle,—the æther, earth, and time of Pherecydes,—the atoms of Leucippus,—the existence and non-existence, the plenum and vacuum of Democritus,—the fire of Heraclitus,—and the numbers of Pythagoras. Imitating too, the well-known sentiment of Anacreon, he declares, that his enumeration is yet imperfect, and that other multitudes of names rush upon him from Libya, &c. Hermias is placed by Cave in

the second century. His style (with the exception of a few mutilated passages) is neat, perspicuous, and pointed; and his humour is more pure and temperate than that of Lucian. This little piece is printed at the end of Worth's edition of Tatian; Oxford, 1700.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMUM BONUM OF PAGANISM...IMMORTALITY NO PART OF IT...SYSTEM OF EPICURUS...THE STOICS...OLD ACADEMY...VARRO'S ESTIMATE OF ALL POSSIBLE SECTS ...CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE pretensions of Paganism to the rewards of the "life to come," have been thus far refuted by an appeal to some of the most celebrated systems of antient theology:—and it has appeared, that the best philosophy of nature rose no higher than to an uncertainty on the great subject of God and the soul.

This perhaps might have sufficed:—but the argument will be more complete and satisfactory, if we also inquire into the principal opinions which were entertained by the Heathen world, concerning human happiness. In the lecture which included some notice of the Ethics of Plato, provision was made for this branch of the subject;* and it was promised, that a larger view should be taken of the opinions of the

* P. 238.

Pagans concerning the Summum Bonum, the proper aim and end of all the counsels and actions of man. Indeed, such an inquiry must be, in the highest degree, convincing. For, if the doctrine of immortality was discovered by the light of nature, we shall not fail to observe it in those systems which professed to teach the summum bonum. But, if it made no part of those systems, and if the summum bonum was nothing more than the advantage arising from the best mode of conducting common life, the former conclusion is fully established. That insight into futurity, which has been fondly attributed to certain philosophers, is disproved by the interpretation of their followers. The sects which contended for the discovery of happiness, looked not beyond the present scene of things; and from their degraded hopes and narrow views, we safely conclude that Paganism had nothing to teach, on which the mind of man could rely, concerning an existence in another world.

It has been justly remarked by Augustin that the mode of argument adopted by Socrates, in his encounters with the sophists, laid the foundation of those moral dissensions which distracted his immediate successors in philoso-

phy, and were spread, by their animosity, through the world at large.* For the most part, he had contented himself with the pleasure of refutation: and the same caution which directed the force of his sagacity to the detection of error in others, restrained him from the employment of positive and dogmatical doctrine in his own person. He might have prescribed with superior authority, (if indeed Grecian vanity and Grecian loquaciousness were to be overawed by any authority,) what was the sum of human happiness, and what the mode in which it might best be discovered and attained. But, satisfied with destroying the fabrics of others, he erected no new system in their room. The failure of this precaution gave a free indulgence to the passion and prejudice which now burst forth. Paradox and dogmatism, no longer confined within bounds by the rule of a master,

* Tam præclarâ igitur vitæ mortísque famâ Socrates reliquit plurimos suæ philosophiæ sectatores, quorum certatim studium fuit in quæstione moralium disceptatione versari, ubi agitur de Summo Bono, sine quo fieri homo beatus esse non potest. Quod in Socratis disputationibus, dum omnia movet, destruit, quoniam non evidentèr apparuit, quod cuique placuit, indè sumpserunt, et ubi cuique visum est, constituerunt finem boni. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 3.

tumultuously rushed abroad to disturb the peace of mankind.

——————————velut agmine facto,
Quà data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perflant.*

The final object of human life was darkened and overwhelmed in the storm of conflicting opinions; and sects, blustering at each other, yet conspiring for the destruction of the common welfare, issued from the same parent-school. A restless innovation became the distinguishing mark of philosophy. Those who could not invent for themselves, were able at least to disfigure the inventions of others. Some, therefore, made partial selections, and subsisted upon mixed opinions. Some, again, delighted in opposites. Aristippus placed the happiness of man in pleasure; and Antisthenes in virtue!†

The view which is to be laid before you, of these debates concerning the Summum Bonum,

* Æn. 1.

† Sic autem diversas inter se Socratici de isto fine sententias habuerunt, ut (quod vix credibile est, unius magistri potuisse facere sectatores) quidam summum bonum esse dicerent Voluptatem, sicut Aristippus; quidam Virtutem, sicut Antisthenes. Civ. Dei, lib. viii. c. 3.

shall be drawn principally from two eminent writers of antiquity. They have treated the subject in different manners, but perhaps with nearly equal powers. Cicero has described the principal sects which existed in his age, and endeavoured to ascertain the merits of each:—and we may conclude, that his object in forming such a collection of the doctrines of the Grecian schools, was to insinuate into the minds of his countrymen, those which he deemed most worthy of philosophy, or most conducive to the welfare of man.

Varro, favouring the same common cause with his friend, has taken a more curious and extensive range. He has enumerated, not the sects which actually existed, but those which, in the possible variety of opinions, might exist; and has indulged his imagination in the first instance, that no escape might be pleaded from the preference which he finally gives to the philosophy of the old academy. These shall be considered in their order. A summary shall, therefore, first be given of the leading parts of Cicero's treatise "on the ends of good and evil." It consists of five books. The first and third contain a statement of the Epicurean and Stoical doctrines concerning happiness. The

second and fourth are employed in the refutation of both. The positive part of his own sentiments (if indeed a comparison of this with some of his other works, will allow us to attribute to him any fixed opinion*) is reserved for the last book. Yet this is not done without some disguise, and a peculiarity of management which betrays his imitation of Plato. He scruples to deliver his doctrine in his own person. His representative is Piso, who, on this occasion, may be regarded as the Socrates of Cicero.

The philosophy of Epicurus is divided by Cicero into three branches. In Physics, he adopted generally the system of Democritus.

* That he is not always in the same mind, is evident. In the third book of the Offices, he reasons according to the Stoical formula, because it seemed to have something more splendid and heroic on the subject of virtue, than that of the Old Academy. At the same time, he takes for himself the licence of disputing, which belonged to a follower of the New Academy:—Erit autem hæc formula, Stoïcorum rationi disciplinæque maximè consentanea; quam quidem in his libris, propterea sequimur, quòd splendidiùs hæc ab eis disseruntur, quibus quicquid honestum est, idem utile videtur; nec utile quidquam, quod non honestum. Nobis autem nostra academia magnam licentiam dat, ut quodcunque maximè probabile occurrat, id nostro jure liceat defendere. C. 4.

Something, indeed, he added, and something he altered. However, his alterations were not regarded by others as necessary amendments. On the contrary, he was thought to have corrupted what he attempted to correct.* In logic, he was confessedly inferior to most of those who succeeded in forming schools;† and his open neglect of an art, which was in so much request throughout Greece, brought upon him no small share of resentment and abuse. The particular object of our present inquiry is his morals. In this branch of his doctrine he unhappily adopted the maxim of Aristippus; and thus (strange as it may appear) through a scholar of Socrates, was derived a philosophy without elevation of character, or dignity of object;‡ a philosophy which, in every age,

* Democrito adjicit perpauca mutans, sed ita, ut quæ corrigere vult, mihi quidem depravare videatur. Cic. de Fin. lib. i. c. 6. Bayle blames him for depriving his atoms of the soul which had been given to them by Democritus. Dict. in voc. Epicure.

† Jam in alterâ philosophiæ parte, quæ est quærendi ac disserendi, quæ λογικη dicitur, ille vester planè, ut mihi quidem videtur, inermis ac nudus est. De Fin. lib i. c. 7.

‡ In tertiâ verò parte, quæ est de vitâ et moribus, in constitutione finis, nil generosum sapit atque magnificum. Confirmat illud vel maximè, quod ipsa natura, ut ait ille, adsciscat et re-

has furnished an apology to the idle and the dissolute, and excited, with a few exceptions,* the shame and regret of every sober and virtuous mind!

The enthusiasm of the followers of Epicurus, however, was not to be abated by any reproof; and their attachment to him was shewn in modes of zeal peculiar to themselves. They not only adorned their apartments with his portrait, but wore it on their rings. In their festivities too, he was characteristically remembered, and their drinking cups presented the resemblances of the great master of pleasure.† To these displays of zeal they were emboldened by their growing numbers; for Laertius, who defends his character, gives him such a multitude of friends, that they could hardly

probet, id est voluptatem et dolorem. Ad hæc, et quæ sequamur, et quæ fugiamus, refert omnia. Quod quanquam Aristippi est, à Cyrenaicísque meliùs liberiùsque defenditur; tamen ejusmodi esse judico, ut nihil homine videatur indignius. ib.

* Bayle is strongly inclined to protect Epicurus, and quotes some treatises, the object of which was to prove that he believed and taught some of the higher parts of religion. Bayle is a fertile, and ingenious, but too frequently, a misleading writer.

† Cujus imaginem non modò in tabulis nostri familiares, sed etiam in poculis et in annulis habent. De Fin. lib. v. c. 1.

be counted even by whole cities.* From the nature of their habitual pursuits, therefore, and the necessity of perpetual defence against the attacks, to which they were exposed from the better part of the world, arose those mixed and discordant features by which the Epicureans were distinguished. Cicero hated them; and in many parts of his works has contributed to the picture of the sect. Indulging an unusual complacence among themselves, they were supercilious and arrogant in their treatment of others.† Though lax in principle, they were

* Οἵ τε φίλοι, τοσοῦτοι τὸ πλήθος, ὡς μηδ' ἂν πόλεσιν ὅλαις μετρεῖσθαι δυνάσθαι. In vit. Epic. His doctrine seems to have been particularly acceptable to the common people.—Nescio quomodo (is, qui auctoritatem minimam habet, vim maximam) populus cum illis facit. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 14.

† Tum Velleius fidentèr sanè, *ut solent isti*, nihil tam verens, quàm ne dubitare aliquâ de re videretur; tanquam modò ex Deorum concilio, et ex Epicuri intermundiis descendisset. De Natur. Deor. lib. i. c. 8.—Torquatus is equally disdainful of all pursuits but those of Epicurus. Poetry, he affirms, is the delight only of children; and the sciences to which Plato addicted himself, are built upon false principles. Even if they were true, they contributed nothing to the art of life, the discovery of which was reserved for Epicurus. De Fin. lib. i. c. 21.—Lucretius has carried this arrogance to its greatest height. The benefits conferred on the world by Epicurus, are greater

strenuous and dogmatical in doctrine. With softness of mind they joined an insolence of manner. They lived with delicacy, and disputed with vehemence; and, engaged in the continual pursuit of pleasure, they talked with confidence of their exclusive possession of truth and virtue! These pretensions increased with the hatred which pursued them from the rest of mankind; and they learnt to interpret the aversion which they could not but feel, in a manner the most flattering to their self-love. Epicurus had purposely used a simplicity of language,* not often found in the compositions of that age. To this circumstance, therefore, they pretended to refer the disgust which prevailed against them, and the preference which was commonly shewn by the men of letters for other masters, especially for Plato, Aristotle,

than those of Ceres, Bacchus and Hercules; and he is more deservedly a god than they:—

Quò magis hic meritò nobis DEUS esse videtur:
Ex quo nunc etiam per magnas didita gentes,
Dulcia permulcent animos solatia vitæ.

Lib. v.

* Laertius notices this, and the rage of the grammarians about it:—ἣν (λεξιν) ὅτι ἰδιωτάτη ἐστὶν, Αριστοφάνης ὁ γραμματικὸς αιτιᾶται. In Vit. Epic.

and Theophrastus.* But in return, they extolled the fruitfulness and originality of genius which distinguished their master,—qualities amply manifested in the three hundred volumes† of his composition. They maintained too, that the substance of his doctrine was incontrovertible. He was the great discoverer of truth, the sole architect of human happiness.‡

The truth and happiness thus asserted, were contained in a single word—Pleasure. This

* Sed existimo te minùs eo delectari, quòd ista Platonis, Aristotelis, Theophrasti orationis ornamenta neglexerit. De Fin. lib. i. c. 5.

† Laertius calls them cylinders:—*κύλινδροι μὲν γὰρ πρὸς τὰς τριακοσίας εἰσί.* Of late, an important discovery is said to have been made. According to advice from Mr. Hayter, two of the thirty-seven books *περὶ Φύσεως* (the 2d and 14th) have been ascertained among the Herculanean MSS. Mr. Walpole mentions also from Palermo the MSS. of some known followers of Epicurus. 1809. The expectations which had been raised by the discovery, do not appear to have been fulfilled. Copies from some of the papyri have been sent to England, and published at Oxford; but the fragments of Epicurus which they exhibit, are too mutilated to be of any real value. The same is said to be the result of the Neapolitan work on the Herculanean MSS. Of the followers of Epicurus, no farther intelligence has been given.

‡ Ea ipsa, quæ ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatæ vitæ dicta sunt, explicabo. De Fin. lib. i. c. 10.

was pronounced to be the Summum Bonum of man: and the principle of this decision was fetched from the philosophy of nature. From its birth, every animal is prompted to seek pleasure, and to avoid pain. In the absence of pleasure we are uneasy, and do not rest till we find it. We are then satisfied; and nothing farther is desired. It was therefore concluded, that pleasure is the genuine object of life!*

Particular value was also set on the early indications of this propensity. They were said to flow from the unadulterated fountain of truth, and to indicate the proper rule of human action before prejudices were acquired, and before the judgment was depraved; as if it were impossible, says Cicero, that those natures, which are not yet depraved by custom, should have a

* From the influence of this propensity, no degree of strength or courage is exempt. When the flesh of Hercules was consumed by the envenomed shirt, he howled with the pain, till the Locrian mountains and the promontories of Eubœa resounded:—

——————————— βοῇ
Δάκνων, ἰύζων· ἀμφὶ δ' ἔτεκον πέτραι,
Λοκρῶν τ' ὄρειοι πρῶνες, Ἐυβοίας τ' ἄκρα.

Laert. in vit. Epic.

radical and inbred pravity of their own.* A wish was indeed expressed by some of the sect, that these original desires might be sanctioned by the subsequent testimony of reason, and that the rest of the world might be convinced, by the force of argument, concerning the truth of the principle primarily assumed. But Epicurus was satisfied with the manifest and decided preference which was given to pleasure, not only by infants, but by the pure and unsuspected testimony of the brutes themselves;† and therefore thought, that reason, though coincident with nature, could bring no necessary accession of evidence to its primary and unerring suggestions. The warmth of fire, the whiteness of snow, the sweetness of honey, are

* Quamvis enim depravatæ non sint, pravæ tamen esse possunt. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 11.—An important remark, and capable of a much more serious application than Cicero was aware of. Socrates seems to have been sensible of the tendency of nature to moral disobedience:—*ἐν τῷ γὰρ αὐτῷ σώματι συμπεφυτευμεναι τῇ ψυχῇ αἱ ἡδοναὶ πείθουσιν αὐτὴν μὴ σωφρονεῖν.* Xen. Mem. lib. i. c. 2. 24.

† Infantes pueri, mutæ bestiæ pænè loquuntur, magistrâ ac duce Naturâ; nihil esse prosperum, nisi voluptatem, nihil asperum, nisi dolorem; de quibus neque depravatè judicant, neque corruptè. De Fin. lib. i. c. 21.

the immediate discovery of the senses, nor do they require to be proved by any deductions of reason. The same, therefore, ought to be our conclusion concerning pleasure, because it stands on the same natural foundation.*

A principle thus dangerous to the moral welfare of mankind, was likely to be followed with suspicion and alarm; and from the defence which is undertaken by Laertius, we see how serious and extensive was the censure bestowed upon Epicurus. Care was, therefore, taken to guard against wrong interpretations of his doctrine, while loud complaints were made, that the world had conspired to misunderstand or to misrepresent it. Accordingly, it was argued, that pleasure, as such, is disliked by none; and that the pains which it sometimes produces, do not belong to its nature, but are to be attributed entirely to the unskilful manner in which pleasure is pursued.† Hence the true and intelli-

* Negat opus esse ratione, neque disputatione, quam ob rem voluptas expetenda, fugiendus dolor sit. Sentiri hoc putat, ut calere ignem, nivem esse albam, dulce mel; quorum nihil oporteret exquisitis rationibus confirmare; tantùm satis esse admonere. De Fin. lib. i. c. 9.

† Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem, quia voluptas sit, aspernatur, aut odit, aut fugit: sed quia consequuntur magni do-

gent Epicurean professed an hatred and contempt of those who abandoned themselves to a gross voluptuousness, and who brought discredit on the philosophy of the sect, by a thoughtless and indiscriminate indulgence.* The man of genuine pleasure was to be a man of judgment. He was required to employ much nicety and discretion in the choice of his objects, and the mode of obtaining them. There might be a season when pleasure was not to be taken. Sometimes, a present pleasure was to be declined, and a future one preferred; and sometimes a small pain was to be endured, that a greater might be avoided. But when no office of life imposed the necessity of forbearance, all pleasure was to be taken, and all pain to be avoided.†

lores eos, qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt. De Fin. lib. i. c. 10.

* At verò eos et accusamus, et justo odio dignissimos ducimus, qui, blanditiis præsentium voluptatum deliniti atque corrupti, quos dolores et quas molestias excepturi sint, occæcati cupidine non provident. ib.

† Libero tempore, cùm solita nobis est eligendi optio, cùmque nihil impedit, quò minùs id, quod maximè placeat, facere possimus, omnis voluptas assumenda est, omnis dolor depellendus. Temporibus autem quibusdam, et aut officiis debitis, aut rerum necessitatibus sæpè eveniet, ut et voluptates repudiandæ sint et molestiæ non recusandæ. De Fin. lib. i. c. 10.

This liberty resulted from a standing maxim of the school, that in no kind of pleasure, considered in its own nature, could there be any evil; but that all the evil which might eventually attach to it, was created by other circumstances.* Pleasure, therefore, was both the beginning and the end of life. To this, as to their supreme and final object, were all human actions to be referred; and to enjoy constant pleasure both of body and mind, with no experience and no expectation of pain, was the Summum Bonum of man.†

But nothing had as yet been said of the virtues; and it was unadvisable to construct any system of morals, without allowing them some place in it. Prudence was therefore called in as the preceptress of life; and her office was to restrain the rashness of false opinion, to allay the tumult of desire, and to conduct the votary

* ἀδεμία ἡδονὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν κακή. This is quoted by Laertius from the authority of Epicurus himself.

† Perspicuum est, omnes rectas res atque laudabiles eò referri, ut cum voluptate vivatur. Quoniam autem id est vel summum bonum, vel ultimum, vel extremum, quod Græci τελος nominant, quod ipsum nullam ad aliam rem, ad id autem res referuntur omnes: fatendum est, summum esse bonum jucundè vivere. De Fin. lib. i. c. 12.

to real pleasure, by confining him within the bounds of nature.* And hence it was, that the system of Epicurus aspired to the character of Wisdom, and, as Lucretius informs us, obtained the name itself as descriptive of its appropriate excellence.† In the same manner was Temperance employed; not that it possessed any value in itself, but that it was promotive of pleasure, which was secured and increased by its judicious and well-timed restrictions. Fortitude contributed to the same end; and by the safeguard which it furnished to man, rescued him from the ill effects of fear, both in life and death. Similar too was the connection of justice with pleasure; for by its steadiness it tends to a beneficial tranquillity; and by that equitable distribution which it favours, it gives us the reasonable assurance, that we shall never want a proper supply of those things which are

* Sapientia est adhibenda, quæ et terroribus cupiditatibúsque detractis, et omnium falsarum opinionum temeritate direptâ, certissimam se nobis ducem præbeat ad voluptatem. De Fin. lib. i. c. 13.

† ———Deus ille fuit, Deus, inclute Memmi,
Qui princeps vitæ rationem invenit eam, quæ
Nunc appellatur Sapientia———————

Lib. 5.

desired by a nature sound and undepraved. However, while thus associated with pleasure, it is to be observed, that the virtues had only a secondary and subordinate station. In themselves they were of no esteem; nor had they any farther value than as they were assistant to Pleasure, and promotive of her objects. Such, as Laertius confesses, was the settled judgment of Epicurus himself.*

It was not to be expected that his enemies would fail to take their advantage of so degrading a principle; and Cicero has mentioned the picture which Cleanthes used to draw, for the benefit of his scholars, of Pleasure attended by the Virtues as her waiting-maids.† But Augustin has stated it at greater length, and proved, in this instance, an useful commentator on Cicero. Pleasure is seated on a throne, delicate in her person, and regal in her state. Beneath, in the habit of servants, stand the

* Διὰ δὲ τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τὰς ἀρέτας αἱρεῖσθαι, οὐ δι' αὐτὰς. Laert. in vit. Epic.

† Jubebat eos, qui audiebant, secum ipsos cogitare pictam in tabulâ Voluptatem pulcherrimo in vestitu et ornatu regali, in solio sedentem; præstò esse Virtutes, ut ancillulas, quæ nihil aliud agerent, nullum suum officium ducerent, nisi ut Voluptati ministrarent. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 21.

Virtues, observant of her gestures, and ready to execute her will. She issues her commands. To Prudence it is enjoined, that she ascertain the methods in which the kingdom of Pleasure may be best administered, and that she provide for its safety.* Justice is ordered to make so skilful a distribution of her good offices, that they may produce the profitable returns of friendship, and the supply of those conveniences which are necessary for the body. She is also required to abstain from injury to any, lest, through the disturbance of the laws, Pleasure be interrupted in the enjoyment of that security which she loves.† It is the task of Fortitude to counteract the ill effects of pain by thinking intensely of her great mistress Pleasure, and to diminish a present anguish by the remembrance of past delights.‡ Finally, Temperance

* Quæ Prudentiæ jubeat, ut vigilantèr inquirat, quomodo Voluptas regnet, et salva sit. Civ. Dei, lib. v. c. 20.

† Justitiæ jubeat, ut præstet beneficia quæ potest, ad comparandas amicitias corporalibus commodis necessarias; nulli faciat injuriam, ne offensis legibus Voluptas vivere secura non possit. ib.

‡ Fortitudini jubeat, ut si dolor corpori acciderit, qui non compellat in mortem, teneat dominam suam, id est, Voluptatem, fortitèr in animi cogitatione, ut per pristinarum deliciarum suarum recordationem mitiget præsentis doloris aculeos. ib.

is commanded to provide for a due moderation in the use of food, especially of such as causes a more than usual delight; for noxious humours are bred by too much indulgence and repletion; and soundness of body is ever necessary to the pleasures of Epicurus.*

After this notice of his moral system, we shall not be surprised that the whole of his philosophy was accommodated to the senses. To this primary standard he referred the laws of reasoning and of nature.† All other knowledge was pronounced to be capricious and uncertain; nor ought we to admit the truth of any thing which is not capable of being proved by sensation. By adhering to this rule, we are delivered from those superstitions to which men are subjected by every other kind of philosophy. This is the great remedy against the fear of death; for, since death destroys the senses, and therefore annihilates the man, no ill consequences can ensue. On the same principle we shall no

* Temperantiæ jubeat, ut tantum capiat alimentorum, et siqua delectent, ne per immoderationem noxium aliquid valetudinem turbet; et voluptas, quam etiam in corporis sanitate Epicurei maximam ponunt, gravitèr offendatur. ib.

† Πᾶς λόγος ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἤρτηται. Laert. in vit. Epic.

longer be terrified by the suggestions of religion; for, the senses being the acknowledged test of every subject, nothing occult or mysterious can remain. By the same superior doctrine are also removed all slavish apprehensions of a Deity.* Hence result calmness and deliberation of mind; for, when the nature of human desires is once satisfactorily explained, a moderation necessarily follows;† and when we have obtained an infallible standard of judgment, the distinction of truth from falsehood is plain and obvious, and the great desideratum of human happiness is at length discovered.

Some suspicion might perhaps have followed this free statement of Cicero, pledged as he was to refute the system which he describes. But

* Ad ea accedit, ut neque divinum numen horreat. De Fin. lib. i. c. 12.

† Epicurus drew his confidence from the knowledge of physics, in which he took much pride.—In physicis plurimum posuit. Eâ scientiâ, et verborum vis, et natura orationis, et consequentium repugnantiúmque ratio potest perspici. Omnium autem rerum naturâ cognitâ, levamur superstitione, liberamur mortis metu, non conturbamur ignoratione rerum, ex quâ ipsâ horribiles exsistunt sæpè formidines. Denique etiam morati meliùs erimus, cùm didicerimus, quæ natura desiderat. De Fin. lib. i. c. 19.

he is amply justified by Epicurus himself, in whose letters is contained a summary of his philosophy. There we learn, in perfect conformity with the view already taken, that the great and reigning object of human life,—its beginning and its end,—is Pleasure;* yet that this excludes neither the possession of virtue, nor a discreet submission to labour, for labour may be rendered by circumstances more desirable than present ease;† that to live pleasantly is therefore to live prudently;‡ for Fortune is no Deity, as the vulgar suppose, but Prudence is the mistress of happiness.

Whoever possesses these principles will not be afraid of death; for he knows, that all good and all evil reside in sensation alone.§ Hence it follows, that death is no concern of man; for, while we live, death is absent from us; but

* Διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τέλος λέγομεν εἶναι τοῦ μακαρίως ζῆν. Laert. in vit. Epic.

† Ἔστιν ὅτε πολλὰς ἡδονὰς ὑπερβαίνομεν, ὅταν πλεῖον ἡμῖν τὸ δυσχερὲς ἐκ τούτων ἕπηται· καὶ πολλὰς ἀλγηδόνας ἡδονῶν κρείττους νομίζομεν, ἐπεὶδὰν μείζων ἡμῖν ἡδονὴ παρακολουθῇ, πολὺν χρόνον ὑπομείνασι τὰς ἀλγηδόνας. ib.

‡ οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδέως ζῆν, ἄνευ τοῦ φρονίμως. ib.

§ Πᾶν ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν ἐν αἰσθήσει· στέρησις δὲ ἐστιν αἰσθήσεως, ὁ θάνατος. ib.

when death comes, we no longer exist.* He, therefore, who is gifted with health of body, and tranquillity of mind, is truly happy;† and being so, he has no fears now nor hereafter. Though there be gods, he has nothing to hope or to dread from them. With life, all his concerns are ended, and the persuasion of this truth takes from man even the desire of immortality!‡

To the portrait of this sect succeeds one of an opposite nature. Cicero observes, indeed, that the contention with the Stoics was of a more noble and exalted kind than that which had been maintained with the Epicureans. These were destitute of logic, and possessed neither acuteness in debate, nor profoundness in learning. The triumph over them was, therefore, comparatively easy.§ The same facility at-

* Τὸ φρικαδέστατον οὖν τῶν κακῶν, ὁ θάνατος, οὐδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς· ἐπειδήπερ ὅταν μὲν ἡμεῖς ὦμεν, ὁ θάνατος οὐ πάρεστιν· ὅταν δὲ ὁ θάνατος παρῇ, τόθ' ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐσμὲν. ib.

† Τούτων γὰρ ἁπλανὴς θεωρία πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν καὶ φυγὴν ἐπαναγαγεῖν οἶδεν ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος ὑγιείαν, καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀταραξίαν. ib.

‡ Γνῶσις ὀρθὴ τοῦ μηδὲν εἶναι πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὸν θάνατον, ἀπολαυστὸν ποιεῖ τὸ τῆς ζωῆς θνητόν· οὐκ ἄπορον προστιθεῖσα χρόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀθανασίας ἀφελομένη πόθον. ib.

§ Itaque quanquam in eo sermone qui cum Torquato est habitus, non remissi fuimus; tamen hæc acrior est cum Stoïcis

tended an attack on their principles; and a summum bonum resolvable into pleasure alone, had not sufficient dignity to be capable of an honourable defence. In both these points the Stoics were manifestly superior. A minute and anxious attention to logic, was a distinguishing mark of that sect. Indeed, Zeno had placed this science at the head of all philosophy;* and his scholars were well instructed in the management of their reasoning powers, and in every variety of disputation. They knew the art of demonstration,† and the proof of things less certain, by those which were more certain; when to use with most advantage the cautious mode,‡ or that which guards the disputant from an untimely production of his agreement or disagreement; the unassenting mode,§ or that which stiffly maintains its ground, and does not too easily yield even to the force of

parata contentio. Quæ enim de voluptate dicuntur, ea nec acutissimè nec absconditè disseruntur. Neque enim qui defendunt eam, versuti in disserendo sunt, nec qui contrà dicunt, causam difficilem repellunt. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 1.

* Ἄλλοι δὲ πρῶτον μὲν τὸ λογικὸν τάττουσι· δεύτερον δὲ τὸ φυσικὸν, καὶ τρίτον τὸ ἠθικὸν· ὧν ἐστι Ζήνων. Laert. in vit. Zen.

† Ἀπόδειξις. Laert. in vit. Zen. ‡ Ἀποροπτωσία. ib.

§ Ἀνεικαιότης. ib.

probability; the irrefutable mode,* or that which preserves the logician from the shame of self-contradiction; and the anti-illusive mode,† or that which is accustomed to bring the outward appearances of things to the test of right reason, and to pursue every subject to its just conclusion. But even the fame of Zeno was surpassed by the transcendant merits of one, who is supposed to have been his scholar; and it was shrewdly suspected by most people, that if the gods made use of any system of logic, it could be no other than that of Chrysippus.‡

But together with their logic, the morals of the Stoics were of an higher cast than those of the Epicureans. Their summum bonum was virtue, or, according to the favourite term of Cato, the honestum. And in the maintenance of this principle, they exceeded the Peripatetics themselves. These indeed gave the supreme rank to virtue; and this they asserted in a tone the most decisive. Yet they allowed, that, in addition to the goods of the mind and body, the conjunction of which was indispensable to the

* Ἀνελεγξία. ib. † Ἀμπαιότης. ib.

‡ ὅτω δ' ἐπίδοξος ἐν τοῖς διαλεκτικοῖς ἐγένετο, ὥστε δοκεῖν τὸς πλείυς ὅτι εἰ παρὰ θεοῖς ἦν ἡ διαλεκτική, ὐκ ἄν ἦν ἄλλη ἢ ἡ Χρυσιππειος. ib. in vit. Chrysip.

summum bonum, certain external advantages were also desirable, in order to leave no reasonable wish of happiness unsatisfied. On the other hand, the Stoics positively denied, that either the nature or the name of good was to be attributed to any thing but the honestum. This was the sole object of a life directed to a right end, and in this, without the concurrence of any other reputed good, consisted the true and proper happiness of man.*

Thus far the Stoic appears to be superior to the Epicurean in the choice of his moral principle, and in the means of impressing it on the reason of mankind. But he soon forfeited the advantages with which he began, through the unbending and injudicious rigour with which he employed them. It was the peculiarity of his sect to push every principle to excess. And thus it happened, that they eventually injured the very cause of reason and virtue which they attempted to promote. The natural result of

* Pugnant Stoïci cum Peripateticis. Alteri negant quicquam esse bonum, nisi quod honestum sit. Alteri, plurimum se, et longè longèque plurimum tribuere honestati, sed tamen et in corpore, et extra, esse quædam bona. Et certamen honestum, et disputatio splendida; omnis est enim de virtutis dignitate contentio. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 21.

their study of logic ought to have been such a lucid arrangement of their doctrines, and such a restriction of them within the bounds of right reason, as should convince their adversaries, and make objection hopeless. But labouring at demonstration with too much strictness, they clouded what might have been clear.* Overstraining the arguments which promised to be most serviceable to their cause, they deprived them of their natural evidence; and feeling, or affecting to feel, that the terms hitherto employed in philosophy were not sufficiently exact to express the niceness of their conceptions, they became unnecessarily technical,† or grew obscure through an ill-judged attempt at a discrimination which knew not when to be satisfied. These were some of the prominent errors of their dialectics.

* Non meherculè soleo temerè contra Stoïcos, says Cicero; — non quo illis admodum assentiar; sed pudore impedior; ita multa dicunt, quæ vix intelligam. De Fin. lib. iv. c. 1. Cato allows the obscurity, but endeavours to charge it on the subject. It was well answered, however, that the Peripatetics spoke intelligibly on the same subjects.

† Cato takes the liberty which Zeno had used—cùm rem aliquam invenisset inusitatam, inauditum quoque ei rei nomen imponere. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 4.

It was still more to be desired, that the moral principles which they so loftily maintained, should have been adapted, with temper and judgment, to the understandings and affections of mankind. But this salutary application was prevented by the extravagance, unfortunately so characteristic of the Stoical school. While the honestum was pronounced to be the only object of human pursuit, the needful offices and tender relations of common life appeared to be extinguished; and mankind, instead of being attracted to goodness thus proclaimed, maintained a suspicious distance from it. Gravity was forced into severity, and constancy into ferociousness. Virtue learnt to clothe herself in perpetual frowns, and walked abroad for the terror of the world. Moral duty became at once narrow and impracticable, refined and intolerant, unintelligible and forbidding. Little was left to complete this view of the unamiable temper and habitual gloom of the Stoic; yet even this was filled up by the rage and envy of philosophical party.* Swelling with the arro-

* Laertius says, that Chrysippus was envious of the fertility of Epicurus's genius, and determined to write book for book:—ἐζήλου δὲ αὐτὸν Χρύσιππος ἐν πολυγραφίᾳ· καθά φησι Καρνεάδης,

gance of his own sufficiency, he stoutly denied the possession of wisdom or virtue to the rest of mankind. Though, in certain points, the suggestions of that reason which is common to all, produced in his mind an unavoidable concurrence with other men, he scorned to confess it.* And though, on other occasions, he availed himself of the labours of a rival school, he loudly maintained his independence and originality, and affected to despise the aid of all foreign resources. While he meanly borrowed the substance of his philosophy, he proudly concealed it; and clandestinely adopting the doctrines of the Peripatetics and Academicians, stamped

παράσιτον αὐτὸν τῶν βιβλίων ἀποκαλῶν· εἰ γὰρ τι γράψας ὁ Ἐπίκουρος, φιλονεικεῖ τοσοῦτο γράψαι ὁ Χρύσιππος. In vit Epic. He seems indeed to have succeeded in his rivalry, and to have more than doubled the number. However, amidst this shew of copiousness, he was "hard-bound;" for in order to complete the necessary quantity of volumes, he quoted profusely from other writers, and repeated himself too. It was the praise of Epicurus, that his numerous writings were his own.

* Quis enim ferre posset ita loquentem eum, qui se auctorem vitæ graviter et sapienter agendæ profiteretur, nomina rerum commutantem; cùmque idem sentiret quod omnes, quibus eandem vim tribueret, alia nomina imponentem, verba modò mutantem, de opinionibus nihil detrahentem? De Fin. lib. iv. c. 9.

them with a new name, and asserted them as his own.*

A few specimens, first, of the principles of the Stoics, and next, of the manner in which they attempted to deduce their philosophy from the nature of man, will be necessary to substantiate the character here attributed to them. Lest a more diffuse discussion should leave their favourite maxim undefined, and therefore deprive it of its cogency, they had recourse to the point and compression of their much-loved logic. They stated therefore, in a syllogistic manner, that whatever is, in its nature, good, is laudable; and that whatever is laudable, is virtuous, or honestum. Hence the conclusion was drawn, that what is good, must therefore be virtuous, or honestum.†

It is obvious that this argument was liable to be combated at the outset, by all those who counted personal and extrinsic conveniences

* Stoïci, cùm à Peripateticis et Academicis omnia transtulissent, nominibus aliis easdem res secuti sunt. De Fin. lib. v. c. 8.

† Concluduntur igitur eorum argumenta sic:—quod est bonum, omne laudabile est; quod autem laudabile est, omne honestum est:—Bonum igitur quod est, honestum est. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 8.

among the goods of life; for, though health, riches, fame, and other such circumstances, were by many esteemed to be good, yet by few were they said to be laudable.* These, therefore, were not convertible terms, nor were they necessarily predicated of the same objects. However, the Stoics were unmoved, and persisted in their happy discovery, that all possible good was contained in, and confined to, the honestum;—and hence it was still represented as the only object of human pursuit.† On the same principle they determined, that the only object to be avoided was that which is opposed to the only object to be pursued. But the contrary to virtue, or the honestum, is vice, or, according to the favourite term of Cato, the turpe. It followed, therefore, that as to the real pur-

* Quis tibi ergo istud dabit, præter Pyrrhonem, Aristonem, eorúmve similes? quos tu non probas. Aristoteles, Xenocrates, tota illa familia, non dabit; quippe qui valetudinem, vires, divitias, gloriam, multa alia, bona esse dicunt, laudabilia non dicant. De Fin. lib. iv. c. 18.

† Many others had determined that virtue was desirable on its own account. The peculiarity of the Stoics was in the assertion, that the honestum was the only good, and therefore the only thing to be desired.—Cæteris hæc est tuenda sententia, maximè tamen his Stoïcis, qui nihil aliud in bonorum numero, nisi honestum, esse voluerunt. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 11.

poses of life, no other than these two classes of things could properly be said to exist. And this led to the disregard so strongly shewn by the Stoics, for all those common and intermediate objects which are termed blessings or evils by the rest of mankind. The goods of the body, or of fortune, were no part of the honestum, and were therefore treated as if they had no being, or were of no serious consideration. And on the same principle, poverty, pain, deformity, and other such things, were no part of the turpe, and therefore could not be considered as evils by the wise man. However, some indirect notice of these objects was forced from the Stoics in their own despite. Indeed, it is obvious that life cannot subsist without the experience of them in a greater or less degree. It was therefore reluctantly granted, that some of those things which are commonly called good, might indeed be taken by man, if he had his choice; but they were not to be pursued, or desired, as if they were of any value in their own nature.* And in the same manner, those

* Illa, quæ in corpore excellerent, stultè antiquos dixisse per se esse expetenda;—et sumenda potiùs, quàm expetenda. De Fin. lib. iv. c. 8. On this was founded their claim of ἐυπάθειαι

which were reputed to be evil, might be simply declined, in case of a free choice; but that none of them were of sufficient moment to be dreaded.* In short, all these are of a neutral character. They have not in themselves the qualities either of good or evil; but all the good or evil supposed to be in them, depends entirely on the use or application which is made of them by man himself.† Yet though they are certainly neuter and indifferent in their nature, all of them may not be equally unimportant with respect to man. Some may contribute, more than others, to wisdom or virtue; and this may be supposed of certain qualities of the body, without which the endowments of the mind

for themselves, while other men were subject to the grosser influence of πάθη. Civ. Dei, lib. xiv. c. 8.

* Nemo est quin, cùm utrumvis liceat, aptas malit et integras omnes partes corporis, quàm eodem usu imminutas aut detortas habere. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 5.

† Τῶν δὲ ὄντων φασὶ τὰ μὲν ἀγαθὰ εἶναι· τὰ δὲ, κακά· τὰ δὲ, ὐδέτερα· ἀγαθὰ μὲν ὖν τάς τε ἀρετὰς, φρόνησιν, δικαιοσύνην, ἀνδρείαν, σωφροσύνην, καὶ τὰ λοιπά· κακὰ δὲ, τὰ ἐνοντία, ἀφροσύνην, ἀδικίαν, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ· ὐδέτερα δὲ, ὅσα μήτε ὠφελεῖ μήτε βλάπτει· οἷον ζωὴ, ὑγιεία, ἡδονὴ, κάλλος, ἰσχυς, πλοῦτος, δόξα, εὐγένεια, καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἐναντια, θάνατος, νόσος, πόνος, αἶσχος, ἀσθένεια, πενία, ἀδοξία, δυσγένεια, καὶ τὰ τούτοις παραπλήσια. Laert. in vit. Zen.

cannot be preserved in their perfection. These, therefore, may be entitled to a proportional estimation relatively considered.* Accordingly, to these Zeno gave the name of προηγμενα, or things preferred But others are not conducive to this beneficial purpose, and therefore are of no estimation: and to these was given the counter-term of αποπροηγμενα, or things rejected. Other distinctions were still made, whether of things thus estimable, some might not have greater reason than others for the preference shewn to them; and whether, of the things deserving no estimation, some might partly carry in their own nature the causes of their rejection, and partly not. But into these, and other such questions, it would be both tedious and trifling to enter. I will not discuss, with the minuteness of Stoical discrimination, what is the pre-

* Quæ autem æstimanda essent, eorum in aliis satis esse causæ, quamobrem quibusdam antepònuntur, ut in valetudine, ut in integritate sensuum, &c.;—alia autem non esse ejusmodi. Itémque eorum, quæ nullâ æstimatione digna essent, partìm satis habere causæ, quamobrem rejicerentur, ut dolorem, sensuum amissionem, &c.;—partìm non. Itémque hinc esse illud exortum, quod Zeno προηγμένον, contráque quod ἀποπροηγμένον nominavit, cùm uteretur in linguâ copiosâ factis tamen nominibus ac novis. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 15.

cise nature of those circumstances belonging to the condition of man, which cannot be said to have any discoverable influence on his mind, or affect the great purpose of his life. I will not inquire, in what class we ought to place the power of extending or contracting a finger; or, in what sense we are to pronounce it indifferent, that the hairs of our head should be even or odd.* Let us pass to points of more importance.

From the rigorous maintenance of their leading maxim, that the honestum is the sole object of life, came the extraordinary doctrine of the equality of all vices. In this agreed their principal authorities, Chrysippus, Persæus, and Zeno; for, as it was argued, if that which is true, cannot have any thing truer than truth; and if that which is false cannot be exceeded by any thing more false than falsehood; neither can deceit be greater than deceit; nor is one sin greater than another; therefore they are equal. This was supposed to be proved by a familiar and convincing example. Two men are walking to Canobus; one of them is a hundred sta-

* Ἄλλως δὲ λέγεται ἀδιάφορα, τὰ μήτε ὁρμῆς μήτε ἀφορμῆς κινητικά· ὡς ἔχει τὸ ἀρτίας ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς τρίχας ἢ περιττὰς, ἢ ἐκτεῖναι τὸν δάκτυλον, ἢ συστεῖλαι. Laert. in vit. Zen.

dia from it; the other only one; but both of them are equally not in Canobus.* On the same principle, therefore, it was concluded, that those who are guilty of vices, reputed to be, some of them greater, and some less, are equally not in the honestum. Their actions are no part of virtue; and as there is no medium,† they must all equally belong to the class of the turpia.

A similar reasoning was employed concerning that wisdom which belongs to the honestum. Every man was pronounced to be either wise or foolish; and each of these cases was to be understood in a strict and absolute manner. No gradations were allowed, for here also the existence of a medium was denied. This too was supposed to be proved by familiar examples; for, as Cato argues,‡ the whelp which is several

* Καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἑκατόν ϛαδίους ἀπέχων Κανώβου, καὶ ὁ ἕνα, ἐπίσης οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν Κανώβῳ. Laert. in vit. Zen.

† Ἀρέσκει δὲ αὐτοῖς, μηδὲν μεταξὺ εἶναι ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας. ib.

‡ Ut enim qui demersi sunt in aquâ, nihilo magis respirare possunt, si non longè absunt à summo, ut jam jamque possint emergere, quàm si etiam tum essent in profundo:—nec catulus ille, qui jam appropinquat ut videat, plus cernit quàm is, qui modò est natus; ita qui processit aliquantùm ad virtutis aditum,

days old, is, with respect to actual sight, on a par with the whelp which is just born. The man too, who is immersed in water, whether he be near the surface, or at the lowest depth of the ocean, is equally incapable of respiration. On the same principle, therefore, it is concluded that he, who has not completely emerged from folly, cannot, in any degree, be either wise or happy! With similar extravagance was it contended by the sect, that he who once became wise, must always continue so;* that there was a chain of connection between the virtues, and that he who possessed one, necessarily drew the rest after it, and therefore possessed all;† and finally, that the man thus gifted, was thenceforth free from all possibility of vice or error!‡

nihilò minùs in miseriâ est, quàm ille, qui nihil processit. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 14. Cicero connects a constitutional tenderness for Plato with his reprobation of such principles:—ut Plato, tantus ille vir, si sapiens non fuerit, nihilò meliùs, quàm quivis improbissimus, nec beatiùs vixerit. ib. c. 9.

* Ἀρέσκει δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ διαπαντὸς χρῆσθαι τῇ ἀρετῇ· ἀναπόβλητος γὰρ ἐστιν, καὶ πάντοτε τῇ ψυχῇ χρῆται ὅσῃ τελείᾳ ὁ σπουδαῖος. Laert. in vit. Zen.

† Τὰς δὲ ἀρετὰς λέγουσιν κατακολουθεῖν ἀλλήλαις, καὶ τὸν μίαν ἔχοντα, πάσας ἔχειν. ib.

‡ Ἔτι καὶ ἀναμαρτήτους, τῷ ἀπεριπτώτους εἶναι ἁμαρτήματι. ib.

These are perhaps sufficient specimens of their principles; and it only remains to see, in what manner the Stoics deduced their philosophy from the nature of man.

The Stoics, like the Epicureans, took their view of man from the first stage of life. From this, however, they drew a different conclusion. Every animal, they observed, as soon as it is born, shews a disposition to preserve its being, and to love whatever is promotive of its welfare.* On the same principle, it dislikes and avoids whatever appears to have a contrary tendency. This they pointed out in the actions of infants, who shew a desire to obtain the things which are salutary to them, and a dread of the opposites. But the difference of opinion began concerning the motive, to which these actions were to be attributed. The Stoics dreaded to admit that pleasure was the primary object of nature, lest an inlet should be given to what was base in itself, and lest human life should be degraded by the establishment of so unwor-

* Placet illis, simul atque natum sit animal (hinc enim est ordiendum) ipsum sibi conciliari et commendari ad se conservandum, et ad suum statum, et ad ea quæ conservantia sunt ejus statûs, diligenda. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 5.

thy a principle.* They therefore attributed these early actions of the animal to self-love, as the only motive, and contended, that this was previous to any sensation of pleasure.† To the guardianship of this salutary motive is the infant committed, till some comprehension of things‡ is obtained, and some insight is formed into the arts of life. Hence arises the choice of things estimable, and the rejection or neglect of those which are not so. The former are said to be according to nature; and as the primary business of life is to preserve the state of nature, the next concern must be to cherish and adhere to those things which are agreeable to it. In this consists the power of a just selection; and here we see the junction of human duty with the exertion of a moral preference.§ Here too

* Ne, si voluptatem natura posuisse in iis rebus videatur, quæ primæ appetuntur, multa turpia sequantur. ib.

† Id ita esse sic probant, quòd, antequàm voluptas aut dolor attigerit, salutaria appetant parvi, aspernentúrque contraria; quòd non fieret, nisi statum suum diligerent, interitum timerent. ib. This is the doctrine of Chrysippus:—*τὴν δὲ πρώτην ὁρμὴν φασι τὸ ζῶον ἴσχειν ἐπὶ τὸ τηρεῖν ἑαυτὸ, οἰκειώσης αὐτῷ τῆς φύσεως ἀπ' ἀρχῆς.* Laert. in vit. Zen.

‡ *Κατάληψεις.* De Fin. lib. iii. c. 5.

§ Quâ inventâ selectione, et item rejectione, sequitur deinceps cum officio selectio. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 6.

are the seeds of the celebrated wisdom of the Stoics, that wisdom, which, marking the order of things, and persisting in a right choice, produces a life in accordance with nature,* and discovers the true good, or the honestum itself. And thus at length it appears, why this train of reasoning was adopted by the Stoics, namely, that the life of man might not be abandoned to the blind and vicious impulse of desire, but might be conducted according to the more certain selection of wisdom; for the intelligence of the difference of things, though subsequent in time to the primary appetencies of nature, is prior in importance, and claims all our attention and regard.†

It might have been sufficiently creditable for the Stoics to provide in this manner for the

* The high praises bestowed on nature by the Stoics, seem to be founded on the maxim, that the natures of men are but parts of the nature of the universe:—*μέρη γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ ἡμέτεραι φύσεις τῆς τοῦ ὅλου· διόπερ τέλος γίνεται τὸ ἀκολόθως τῇ φύσει ζῆν· ὅπερ ἐστὶ κατ' ἀρετὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων.* Laert. in vit. Zen.

† Simul autem cepit intelligentiam,—multò eam pluris æstimavit, quàm omnia illa, quæ primùm dilexerat; atque ita cognitione et ratione collegit, ut statueret, in illo collocatum summum illud hominis per se laudandum et expetendum bonum. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 6.

wholesome operation of wisdom. But it seemed to be a decree of their own fate, that whatever they began with reason, should end in absurdity and rant; and that a momentary sobriety should be amply avenged by a return of their constitutional extravagance. The wise man, thus formed from the first punctum of intelligence, is preternaturally enlarged, till he fills up all the view, and hides every other object. With the qualities thus aggregated in his person, he is declared to be perpetually fortunate and supremely happy. He is safe by prerogative, entire in himself, and free from all those accidents to which men less highly gifted are always exposed. He is moved by no danger, and hindered by no difficulty.* He is in want of nothing, nay, he is in full possession of all things.† In short, he is a king, in a truer sense than Tarquin;‡ a dictator, of a larger and higher autho-

* Cùm hoc sit extremum, congruentèr naturæ convenientèrque vivere, necessariò sequitur, omnes sapientes semper felicitèr, absolutè, fortunatè vivere, nullâ re impediri, nullâ prohiberi, nullâ egere. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 7.

† Καὶ τῶν σοφῶν δὲ πάντα εἶναι. Laert. in vit. Zen.

‡ Rectiùs enim appellabitur Rex quàm Tarquinius, qui nec se, nec suos regere potuit; rectiùs magister populi (is enim est Dictator) quàm Sylla, qui trium pestiferorum vitiorum,

rity, than Sylla. He is wealthy, too, beyond all the treasures of Crassus, who would not have marched across the Euphrates without any other object than that of gain, if he had not been stung by the sense of want. Beauty, in the best sense and the highest degree, is also the property of the wise man; that beauty of the mind, which so far surpasses all beauty of the body. And he is possessed of true liberty; for he obeys no master from without. He is invincible too; for, though his body be enchained, his mind is free, and mocks every attempt at restraint. Nor needs he to wait till death comes, that it may be determined, whether his life has been happy or otherwise. He is necessarily happy in himself, under all circumstances, and at all times. Finally, death is in his own power; for whenever it appears eligible to the philosophy which he professes, he voluntarily quits life, that he may shew the perfection of his wisdom, and the agreement of his mind with

luxuriæ, avaritiæ, crudelitatis, magister fuit:—rectiùs dives quàm Crassus, qui nisi eguisset, nunquam Euphratem nullâ belli causâ transire voluisset. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 22.—The list of magnificent titles and qualities might easily be enlarged from Laertius; but those which are mentioned in the text will, perhaps, be deemed sufficient.

the supreme rule of nature. Nor is this confined to the experience of evil fortune, as some suppose. It results entirely from the balance of circumstances and their weight in the scale of nature.* If more circumstances, whether actual or contingent, persuade to life, the Stoic must continue his existence; if otherwise, he will end it. And thus it may happen, that the foolish man may be bound to remain in life, though surrounded by misery, and the wise man may be required to die a voluntary death, though happy, and in the full enjoyment of prosperity!

Such is the termination of the Stoical wisdom, and by this absurd and impious jargon was the detestable practice of suicide connected with the most arrogant assumption of virtue, and made an eventual part of the duty of man!

Let us ascend then to the doctrines of those whom Cicero so often distinguishes by the name

* In quo enim plura sunt, quæ secundùm naturam sunt, hujus officium est in vitâ manere; in quo autem aut sunt plura contraria, aut fore videantur, hujus officium est è vitâ excedere. Ex quo apparet, et sapientis esse aliquando officium excedere è vitâ, cùm beatus sit; et stulti manere in vitâ, cùm sit miser. De Fin. lib. iii. c. 18. To the Epicurean, actual and great suffering was a sufficient warrant for quitting life.

of the Antients. From the inquiry which has just been made into the character of some of the later sects, it appears that they confined their views to single points, and therefore injured philosophy by narrowing its boundaries. Nor were there wanting other masters, whose maxims were selected with similar restrictions. Hieronymus placed the Summum Bonum in a freedom from pain; while Herillus determined that it was to be found in science alone.* But it had been the characteristic of the Old Academy, to consider the subject in a more liberal and extensive manner; and in this sect were comprehended the followers of two pre-eminent men, the immediate disciples of Plato, who were distinguished by the name of Academicians; and the Peripatetics, who adhered to the doctrine of Aristotle; a master, whom Cicero would have regarded as the first of philosophers, if Plato had never existed.† These,

* Hoc (non dolere) Hieronymus Summum Bonum esse dixit.—Sæpè ab Aristotele, à Theophrasto mirabilitèr est laudata per se ipsa rerum scientia. Hoc uno captus, Herillus scientiam Summum Bonum esse defendit, nec rem ullam aliam per se esse expetendam. De Fin. lib. v. c. 25.

† Audebo te ab hâc Academiâ novâ ad veterem illam vocare; in quâ, ut dicere Antiochum audiebas, non ii soli numerantur,

therefore, did not direct mankind to the pursuit of any single object. They preferred all the primary objects of nature, collectively taken; the health, strength, and beauty of the body, the soundness of its parts, and the constant preservation of the whole; and the corresponding goods of the mind,—those seeds, from which the honestas was to spring,—those sparks, from which the flame of virtue was to kindle.* To pursue virtue, and all those objects in connection with, though in subordination to, her, was declared to be most agreeable to nature; and to attain them all, was the Summum Bonum of man. This settled doctrine, as Cicero says, was equally maintained in all their books; in those which were prepared for popular instruction, and those which were reserved for

qui Academici vocantur, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Polemo, Crantor, cæteríque, sed etiam Peripatetici veteres, quorum princeps Aristoteles, quem, excepto Platone, haud scio an rectè dixerim principem philosophorum. De Fin. lib. v. c. 3. The Antiochus here alluded to, had been also the master of Varro.

* In quibus numerant incolumitatem, conservationémque omnium partium, valetudinem, sensus integros, doloris vacuitatem, vires, pulchritudinem, cæteráque generis ejusdem: quorum similia sunt prima in animis, quasi virtutum igniculi et semina. ib. v. c. 7.

private use within the pale of the sect. There was indeed a difference in the style of these writings, for that of the commentaries was more exact than that of the exoteric books, and this sometimes created an appearance of difference in the doctrine. But it was only an appearance, and the sense was commonly the same in both.* Such then being their principles, let us attend to the mode of reasoning adopted by the sect for the purpose of establishing the superiority which was claimed for them.

It is to be observed, that all the sects thought it necessary to refer their inquiries to one common point. All appealed to nature in the first instance; and all quarrelled afterwards about the interpretation of her will. To nature, therefore, looked also the old academicians; and in order to discover the principles by which human life was governed, they went back to its early stages. They were the inventors of the maxim,

* De Summo Bono, quia duo genera librorum sunt, unum popularitèr scriptum, quod εξωτερικον appellabant; alterum limatius, quod in commentariis reliquerunt: non semper idem dicere videntur; nec in summâ tamen ipsâ aut varietas est ulla, apud hos quidem quos nominavi, aut inter ipsos dissentio. De Fin. lib. v. c. 5.

which, as we have just seen, was adopted by the Stoics, that the primary motive by which animals were governed, was self-love; by this they were prompted to preserve their existence, and to live in the manner most agreeable to the dictates of nature.* But it was evident that the same nature is not bestowed on every animal. In order, therefore, to ascertain the ultimate object of human pursuits, it was deemed necessary that an inquiry should be previously made concerning the peculiar constitution of the animal, MAN.

Hence arose the characteristic doctrine of the Old Academy. To this, therefore, Piso steadily looks, and in the gradual and cautious manner in which he makes his approaches to the condition of man, we see his anxiety, lest his conclusion should be exposed to the subsequent hazard of contradiction.

There are animals constituted not as man is. These indeed will also look to the rule of na-

* Ergo instituto veterum, quo etiam Stoïci utuntur, hinc capiamus exordium. Omne animal seipsum diligit; et simul ac ortum est, id agit, ut se conservet, quòd hic ei primus ad omnem vitam tuendam appetitus à naturâ datur, se ut conservet, atque ita sit affectum, ut optimè secundùm naturam affectum esse possit. De Fin. lib. v. c. 9.

ture, but the object of their pursuit will be different from that of man: for, the end to be attained is adapted to the peculiarity of being which distinguishes one animal from another. There are creatures either entirely destitute of soul, or, at the utmost, endued with a very slender portion of it. Of these, therefore, the summum bonum is properly and characteristically placed in the body. To this class belong the swine, an impure and devouring race; and it has been aptly conjectured, that the gods, in their wisdom, put into them a low species of soul, that it might act on their bodies as a salt, and preserve them from putrefaction.* Somewhat more generous is discoverable in creatures above these; and better indications of mind are to be perceived in lions, dogs, and horses, which may be said to exhibit certain resemblances of virtue.† A similar reasoning may

* Etenim omnium rerum, quas creat natura, et tuetur, quæ aut sine animo, aut non multò secùs, earum summum bonum in corpore est: ut non inscitè illud dictum videatur in sue, animam illi pecudi datam pro sale, ne putresceret. De Fin. lib. v. c. 13.

† Sunt etiam bestiæ quædam, in quibus inest aliquid simile virtutis, ut in leonibus, ut in canibus, ut in equis, in quibus non corpora solùm, ut in suibus, sed etiam animorum aliquâ ex parte motus quosdam videmus. ib. c. 14.

be employed even concerning inanimate things, trees, plants, and the like. Indeed, we commonly say, that they live, or that they die; that they are old or young; that they are vigorous or weak; and we bestow upon them what may be termed an education.* These, therefore, have also their respective objects, which are adapted to the peculiarity of nature belonging to each of them in its class of being: and this is so certain, that if the condition of any were to receive an alteration, a change of the object to be pursued must take place in proportion to the change of condition. Piso thinks this position of sufficient importance to be illustrated by an example. The culture of the vine is from without; nor would its own vegetative powers be of much avail, unless they were improved and directed by the care of man. If then the vine could speak, and declare its own wishes concerning its actual condition, it would require just that treatment which the vine-dresser at

* Earum etiam rerum quas terra gignit, educatio quædam et perfectio est, non dissimilis animantium: itaque et vivere vitem et mori dicimus; arborémque et novellam, et vetulam; et vigere et senescere. Ex quo non est alienum, ut animantibus, sic illis et apta quædam ad naturam aptare, et aliena. De Fin. lib. v. c. 14.

present bestows upon it. But if we should suppose it to be suddenly endued with sense and appetite, and the power of motion, it would not be satisfied with this kind of treatment. It would no longer be subject to the absolute disposal of the vine-dresser, but would have an higher object in view, and begin to feel a new care of its own, adapted to the preservation of its added faculties. In short, it would now provide for itself, not as a plant, but as an animal. If we should suppose it to make yet another acquisition, and to obtain a soul like that of man, its self-love would accompany its new property, and increase with its increasing value. Yet, even in this case, the vine would not abandon all care of its original nature, notwithstanding the great value of the additions which had been made to it. Its principal attention, however, would be wisely bestowed upon its recent and most precious endowment, and it would esteem its mind more than all the qualities which it before possessed. The conclusion drawn from this example was therefore, that, in each stage of its condition, the general end would be the same; and the vine would aim at the preservation of itself. The difference introduced would affect only the mode in which the end was to

be attained.* The primary recommendation of nature is still in force; the change that takes place will consist in the application of the same original principle to the varying condition, and the nearer and nearer approaches which are made to excellence of being.†

Since then it is thus established, that the Summum Bonum of every creature is to be accommodated to its specific nature, and since those inquiries have been made with no other view than to discover the Summum Bonum of man; it is necessary to inquire what his nature is, and what are the inferences proper to be drawn from it. The first of these questions is treated with most minuteness and peculiarity of manner by Varro; the second is answered with most eloquence by Cicero.

Varro elaborately inquires into the composition of man; whether his parts be of similar or dissimilar kinds;—of equal, or unequal powers;—whether the soul be of such predominance as

* Similis erit finis boni, atque antea fuerat, nec idem tamen. De Fin. lib. v. c. 14.

† Sic et extremum omnium appetendorum, atque ductum à primâ commendatione naturæ, multis gradibus ascendit, ut ad summum perveniret: quod cumulatur ex integritate corporis, et ex mentis ratione perfectâ. De Fin. lib. v. c. 14.

to be capable of representing the body, together with itself;—whether the body may make reprisals, and aspire to represent the soul also;—and whether man may be said to be entire through the possession of either of these constituent portions of his nature?

If the question be first concerning the soul, whether this, singly considered, may be called the entire man; it will appear, that the soul is to the body, what the horseman is to the horse;*

* Utrùm anima sola sit homo, ut ita sit ei corpus tanquam equus equiti, quærendum putat. Eques enim non homo et equus, sed solus homo est; ideò tamen eques dicitur, quòd aliquo modo se habeat ad equum. Apud Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3. In the early times of the Roman language, *eques* seems to have been used for the horse. In proof of this, A. Gellius quotes a passage from Ennius, which some reciter had wrongly read in one of the theatres:—

Denique vi magnâ quadrupes *equus*, atque elephanti
Projiciunt sese————

This, it seems, was heard with general applause. One of the company, however, suspected the error; and an appeal being afterwards made to an old and valuable manuscript, *eques* was found to have been the original word. Hence, *equitatio* and *equitare* meant also the movement of the horse: and this is proved by a passage from Lucilius. A. Gell. lib. xviii. c. 5. The same passages may be seen in the last chapter of Macrobius's sixth book. The general elegance of Virgil did not

that it performs the office of a governing and directing power, and therefore that the body is subject to its management, and different from its nature. For the horseman, notwithstanding his compound name, is not both horse and man, but is so called, because, from his position and office, he has a certain relation to the horse. Again, if the question be, whether the body alone be the entire man, it will appear, that the body has only that relation to the soul, which the poculum has to the liquor contained in it. For though in the licence of poetry, or the latitude of common use, poculum be sometimes taken for the cup and liquor together, and sometimes for the liquor alone, exclusively of the cup; yet, in the proper signification of the word, it stands for the cup alone; and its name was derived from the capacity of containing liquor.* But, finally, if the question be, whether

prevent him from the occasional employment of this word, in a sense more familiar to antiquity: —

> Fræna Pelethronii Lapithæ, gyrósque dedere
> Impositi dorso, atque *equitem* docuere sub armis
> Insultare solo, et gressus glomerare superbos.
>
> Georg. iii. 117.

* Non enim calix, et potio quam continet calix, simul dici-

man be neither soul alone, nor body alone; but whether, consisting of these two different parts, he be called by one collective name; the answer must be, that this is the true supposition. For, when two horses are harnessed together, and draw the same carriage, we call them by the single term bigæ. Nor is this applicable exclusively to the horse on the right hand, or the horse on the left, though each of them is a part of the bigæ, and each has a certain relation to the other; but to both at once.*

With this minute and laborious ingenuity did Varro establish the favourite maxim of the Old Academy, that the term "man" was used to convey the notion of a being compounded of a body and a rational soul. But the inference drawn by Cicero shews us the purpose for which the sect took these philosophical pains. It was concluded, that, being thus constituted, man was obliged to act according to his twofold nature; and consequently, that, in his search

tur poculum, sed calix solus; ideò tamen quod *potioni continendæ* sit accommodatum. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

* Sicut duos equos junctos bigas vocamus, quorum sive dexter sive sinister pars est bigarum; unum verò eorum quoquo modo se habeat ad alterum, bigas non dicimus, sed ambos simul. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

of happiness, he was to pay a just attention to both parts of his composition. These therefore are stated by Piso to be of unequal value as to each other. But while he pronounces the body to be inferior to the soul, it is yet an essential part of man, and therefore not to be entirely disregarded. Though of less importance, it is entitled to some attention;—and, from that love of our being which is the primary impulse of human action, we infer the desire of nature herself, that the body be as sound and perfect as possible, that all its functions be performed without imperfection, or interruption; and that it be free from mutilation, debility, and disorder.*

But if a certain attention appears to be thus necessary towards the preservation and welfare of the body, the conclusion is much stronger concerning the condition of the soul, the superior part of man. And this being so, the argument will apply itself in a more peculiar manner to the mind; for this is the highest and most excellent part of the soul; and in it are

* Opus est ea valere et vigere, naturales motus usúsque habere, ut nec absit quid eorum, nec ægrum debilitatúmve sit. De Fin. lib. v. c. 12.

lodged the powers of reason, science, and the virtues, and that sovereign authority, by which the whole nature of man is governed.* Yet neither are the virtues equal among themselves, though thus subsisting together. There are two principal sorts; the one, voluntary; the other, involuntary. Of the latter sort, are memory, docility, and those inbred qualities, which constitute genius. But of the former, are the genuine and more lofty virtues—prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice, and others connected with these.† The conclusion therefore is, that man being impelled by self-love to preserve and advance his nature, and his nature being compounded in the manner here described, he will desire the goods which belong to his component parts. But he will regulate this desire

* Deindè id quoque videmus, et ita figuratum corpus, ut excellat aliis, animúmque ita constitutum, ut et sensibus instructus sit, et habeat præstantiam mentis, cui tota hominis natura pareat; in quâ sit mirabilis quædam vis rationis, et cognitionis, et scientiæ, virtutúmque omnium. ib.

† Animi autem, et ejus animi partis, quæ princeps est, quæque mens nominatur, plures sunt virtutes, sed duo prima genera; unum earum, quæ ingenerantur suâpte naturâ, appellantúrque non voluntariæ; alterum earum, quæ, in voluntate positæ, magis proprio nomine appellari solent. De Fin. lib. v. c. 13.

in such a manner as best accords with the relative dignity of each part. When he judges therefore concerning his body and soul, he will not neglect the former, but will decidedly prefer the latter. And of the soul itself he will prefer the most excellent part, the mind. Of the virtues too, he will prefer the greater to the less. To the involuntary ones he will pay a due regard; but his chief esteem will be bestowed on those which are voluntary. In truth, these alone deserve the name of virtues, for they are the produce of reason; and reason is the divinest part of man.*

This then is the true doctrine of the Summum Bonum. It is highly desirable, that a subject of so much importance should be understood by man as soon as he is born: for thus he would pursue the great object of life without loss of time, and without a possibility of error.†

* Ita fiet, ut animi virtus corporis virtuti anteponatur, animíque virtutes non voluntarias vincant virtutes voluntariæ; quæ quidem propriè virtutes appellantur, multúmque excellunt, quòd ex ratione gignuntur; quâ nihil est in homine divinius. De Fin. lib. v. c. 13.

† Cùm igitur ea sit, quam exposui, forma naturæ; si, ut initio dixi, simul atque ortus esset, se quisque cognoscere judicaréque posset, quæ vis et totius esset naturæ et partium singu-

But the proper designation of nature is at first hidden from us. We are content with the mere preservation of the body; and it is long before we arrive at the more important part of the knowledge that is necessary for us. By degrees, however, it is acquired; and in the actions of youth, their love of praise, their feelings of shame, and their pursuit of knowledge and those ingenuous objects which are adapted to the growth and enlargement of the mind, we discover those elements from which virtue at length arises.* It is the business of philosophy to cherish and promote the opening desires of nature. They are the indications of reason,—that god within us; and, if properly followed, they lead to happiness, and discover to us that which we seek,—the ultimate good of man. The beginnings of virtue therefore arise from the capacity of nature. This is the only thing which she furnishes in the first instance. The

larum, continuò videret quid esset hoc quod quærimus, omnium rerum, quas expetimus, summum et ultimum; nec ullâ in re peccare posset. ib. c. 15.

* Non sine causâ, eas, quas dixi, in pueris virtutum quasi scintillulas videmus, è quibus accendi philosophi ratio debet, ut eam, quasi Deum, ducem subsequens, ad naturæ perveniat extremum. De Fin. lib. v. c. 15.

product derived from it is the mere effect of subsequent art;* for virtue is to be considered as an art, or science. It is indeed of more importance than other arts or sciences; but it has this circumstance in common with them; it is taught; and memory, reason, and similar qualities, must be pre-supposed, as necessary to its existence;—since where learning is impracticable, there virtue cannot be.†

Of all the goods then which belong to the component parts of man, this is the most precious. It is the result of learning, and is formed by a gradual development of the qualities of the mind, and a skilful application of them to the discovery of the will of nature. It is indeed of a later date than the primary objects which nature desires. These existed when virtue was not yet formed. But virtue, which is afterwards acquired, takes a just ascendency, and wishes to possess them for its own sake. It

* Virtutem ipsam inchoavit; nihil ampliùs. Itaque nostrum est (quod nostrum dico, artis est) ad ea principia, quæ accepimus, consequentia exquirere, quoad sit id, quod volumus, effectum. ib. c. 21.

† Hoc et de memoriâ dixerim atque ratione, et si quid tale est in homine. Sunt enim hæc et ante doctrinam; sine his autem non potest esse ulla doctrina; ac per hoc nec virtus, quæ utique discitur. Varro, apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

desires itself also on the same account; and it uses both itself and them for the purpose of complete happiness.* The conclusion arising therefore from this method of viewing the nature of man was, that he leads an happy life, who possesses virtue, and those goods of the body and mind without which virtue cannot exist. His life is more happy, who to these adds others, not essential to the subsistence of virtue, namely, beauty, strength, agility, and other such qualities; and the happiness of such a man will be in proportion to the number of these which he possesses. But the most happy life is that of him who unites in himself all possible goods both of body and mind.† Here then at length we find the true end and object

* Quapropter eadem virtus, id est, ars agendæ vitæ, cùm acceperit prima naturæ, quæ sine illâ erant, sed tamen erant, etiam quando eis doctrina adhuc deerat, omnia propter seipsam appetit, simúlque etiam seipsam;—omnibúsque simul, et seipsa utitur eo fine, ut omnibus delectetur atque perfruatur. ib. c. 3.

† Hæc ergo vita hominis, quæ virtute et aliis animi et corporis bonis, sine quibus virtus esse non potest, fruitur, beata esse dicitur. Si verò et aliis, sine quibus esse virtus potest, vel nullis vel pluribus, beatior. Si autem prorsus omnibus, ut nullum omninò bonum desit, vel animi vel corporis, beatissima. Varro, apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

of our existence. This is the Summum Bonum worthy to be desired by man. And this Piso affirms to be intended by the Pythian Apollo, when he commands us to know ourselves. We must inquire into our specific nature, ascertain the component parts of man, and learn the relative value of each; for from this knowledge alone will result a life spent in the enjoyment of its proper objects.*

However, one difficulty yet remained. While the old Academicians placed the Summum Bonum of man in the goods of the soul and body taken together, they wished for something farther, and were unwilling to forego the advantage of external goods, relations, friends, neighbours, and their country at large. They felt, however, that happiness must be exposed to great uncertainty and danger, if it were made to depend on circumstances which are removed from the person itself of man, and over which therefore he has not a sufficient control.† On this account, they placed exter-

* Jubet igitur nos Pythius Apollo noscere nosmetipsos. Cognitio autem hæc est una, ut vim nostri corporis animíque norimus, sequamúrque eam vitam quæ rebus ipsis perfruatur. De Fin. lib. v. c. 16.

† Nec verò quisquam Summum Bonum assequi unquam

nal goods in a secondary class. Yet, while they carefully abstained from calling these an essential and necessary part of the Summum Bonum, they declared them to be highly desirable on account of the pleasure and benefit which resulted from them, and referable, by analogy, to the goods of the first class. Nature herself makes us feel, that, when we discharge any of the outward offices of friendship, patriotism, and the like, these are among the actions which are rightly performed. But all actions which are productive of this sort of approbation must spring from virtue; and virtue was lately placed at the head of the goods of the first class in which consisted the Summum Bonum. The external goods have therefore a secret connection with those which have been already described; and if every right action in the latter, is to be ranked under some one of the virtues in the former class, the goods of both have a certain correspondence, and are, by the will of nature, allied.*

posset, si omnia illa, quæ sunt extra, quanquam expetenda, summo bono continerentur. De Fin. lib. v. c. 23.

* Quo modo igitur, inquies, verum esse poterit, omnia referri ad Summum Bonum, si amicitiæ, si propinquitates, si reliqua externa summo bono non continentur? Hâc videlicet ratione;

Thus then to the other parts of the Academic philosophy is added social attachment. Cicero describes it with much eloquence and feeling.* Springing from the constitution of our nature, it prompts the affection which binds the parents to each other, and to their offspring. But, not satisfied with these objects, it gradually enlarges

quòd ea, quæ externa sunt, iis tuemur officiis, quæ oriuntur à suo cujusque genere virtutis. Nam et amici cultus, et parentis, et qui officio fungitur, in eo ipso prodest, quòd, ita fungi officio, in rectè factis est: quæ sunt orta virtutibus; quæ quidem sapientes sequuntur, utentes tanquam duce naturâ. De Fin. lib. v. c. 24.

* In omni autem honesto, de quo loquimur, nihil est tam illustre, nec quod latiùs pateat, quàm conjunctio inter homines hominum, et quasi quædam societas et communicatio utilitatum, et ipsa caritas generis humani; quæ nata à primo satu, quo à procreatoribus nati diliguntur, et tota domus conjugio et stirpe conjungitur, serpit sensìm foràs cognationibus primùm, tum affinitatibus, deindè amicitiis; pòst vicinitatibus; tum civibus, et iis qui publici socii atque amici sunt; deindè totius complexu generis humani. De Fin. lib. v. c. 23.—Mr. Pope expresses the Academic sentiment in some pleasing lines:—

Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake.
The centre mov'd, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads:
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next, all human race.

itself in all the tender offices of relationship, affinity, and friendship. The care of our neighbourhood is next in order. Hence the principle extends to our whole country, and to those states also which are connected with it by political alliance, and partake in its public interests. Finally, it becomes general, and embraces the whole circle of mankind. This might suffice; but Varro is unwilling that the principle should be restrained by any limits. He carries it through the mundane system, and makes it comprehend those benevolent gods also, who, from their æthereal abodes, are disposed to shed a friendly influence on the man of wisdom.*

Such is the philosophy, in favour of which Cicero has exerted his genius in one of the most valuable of his works. To assist the statement, occasional use has been made of the authority of Varro. But we are now arrived at that part of the subject, in which he must become our principal instructor.† To the view therefore

* Sive in toto orbe, ut sunt gentes, quas ei societas humana conjungit; sive in ipso mundo, qui censetur nomine cœli et terræ, sicut esse dicunt Deos, quos volunt amicos esse homini sapienti. Apud Aug. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

† Yet the remains of his treatise De Philosophiâ are scanty. They are contained in the first three chapters of the 19th book

of the existing sects, let us add the promised account of all the possible ones.

It is remarked by Augustin in his introduction of this subject, that the inquiries of the men of nature concerning happiness, were necessarily confined to the boundaries of nature itself.* They looked to the component parts of man, and either selected one of these as the object of their preference, or joined them together. It has already appeared, that some placed the Summum Bonum in the body; some in the mind; and others, in both. On this triple division, therefore, Varro proceeded to found his calculation. It is observable, that Carneades had not ventured to suppose more than six simple, and three compound, modes, in which philosophy might contemplate the Summum Bonum.† But the number of sects ima-

of Augustin's "City of God." I cannot quite agree with Augustin in his speedy dismissal of the subject, and wish he had gratified our curiosity by larger extracts.

* Nec tamen eos, quamvis diversis errantes modis, naturæ limes intantum ab itinere veritatis deviare permisit, ut non alii in animo, alii in corpore, alii in utroque fines bonorum ponerent et malorum. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

† Sex igitur hæ sunt simplices de summo bonorum malorúmque sententiæ: duæ sine patrono, quatuor defensæ. Junctæ

gined by Varro is no less than two hundred and eighty-eight.* Here however he stopped; and his final opinion was, that the Summum Bonum could not be taught by more than that number of sects; or, at least, that those which might be added, must have a reference to them, and therefore must belong to one of the former classes.† The mode in which he endeavoured to establish his position, was the following.

It was first assumed, that virtue, or the art of life, (for this was the meaning of the term in the school of the Old Academy,) was not to be reckoned among the objects of primary desire. It was learnt like any other art, and was to be subsequently applied to the management of those objects, as reason should suggest. The objects, therefore, to which the appetency of

autem et duplices expositiones summi boni tres omninò fuerunt: nec verò plures, si penitùs rerum naturam videas, esse potuerunt. De Fin. lib. v. c. 8. Compare c. 6.

* Ex quâ tripertitâ velut generalium distributione sectarum M. Varro in libro De Philosophiâ tam multam dogmatum varietatem diligentèr et subtilitèr scrutatus advertit, ut ad cclxxxviii sectas, non quæ jam essent, sed quæ esse possent, adhibens quasdam differentias, facillimè perveniret. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. i.

† Si quæ aliæ possent similitèr adjici. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 2.

man may be supposed to carry him without the help of any instruction, and by the force of nature alone, are four in number. First, Pleasure, which applies to the senses of the body. Secondly, Indolence, in its stricter meaning, or a freedom from bodily pain. Thirdly, the former objects, or positive and negative pleasure, in conjunction; to both of which, thus considered, Epicurus applied the single term of pleasure. Fourthly, the primary objects of nature understood in a large sense, comprehending the former objects, and adding others to them, such as the integrity of the body and its parts, its general health and due conservation, and the exercise of the mind in a greater or less degree, according to the proportion of ability in every man.* In relation therefore to these objects we must now consider virtue, concerning which a reservation was originally made: and

* Quatuor esse quædam, quæ homines sine magistro, sine ullo doctrinæ adminiculo, sine industriâ vel arte vivendi, quæ Virtus dicitur, et proculdubiò discitur, velut naturalitèr appetunt: aut Voluptatem, quâ delectabilitèr movetur corporis sensus: aut Quietem, quâ fit ut nullam molestiam corporis quisque patiatur; aut utramque, quam tamen uno nomine Voluptatis Epicurus appellat; aut universalitèr primæ naturæ, in quibus et hæc sunt et alia. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

the first difference of opinion will begin on the question, Whether virtue, acquired at a later time, is to be considered as inferior, or superior, to each of the four classes of objects before enumerated; or whether it is to be connected with them on a footing of mere equality? If it is inferior, it will be acquired for the sake of the former objects, and be treated in subserviency to them. If superior, the objects will be possessed not so much for their own sake, as for the sake of virtue; and virtue, last in time, will be first in importance. If it is only equal with the objects, each will be possessed not for the sake of the other, but on account of its own value. Now, pleasure is the first of the four classes. Virtue may therefore be considered in the three modes here mentioned, as inferior, superior, or equal, to pleasure. But if so, it may be considered in the same manner with respect to each of the remaining classes,—indolence, positive and negative pleasure together, and the primary objects of nature generally understood. From the four classes then, capable of being considered, each of them in three modes, results the number twelve. Accordingly, this is the number of sects obtained in the first stage, from a comparison of virtue

which is subsequently attained, with the natural objects which may be primarily desired.*

But this number will at once be doubled, if we suppose a single difference of opinion concerning the principle on which each of the twelve sects is to be followed. Some men adopt a particular mode of philosophy for their own sakes; and look no farther than to the personal pleasure or advantage to be derived from the profession of it. But some philosophize with more liberality. These embrace the social principle; and in their choice of a school endeavour to benefit others together with themselves. Each of the sects then, already supposed, may be followed on the first, or second of these principles; and if twelve are of one opinion, twelve may be of another. And thus are twenty-four sects obtained.†

* Hæc igitur quatuor, id est, voluptas, quies, utrumque, prima naturæ, ita sunt in nobis, ut vel virtus, quam postea doctrina inserit, propter hæc appetenda sit; aut ista propter virtutem, aut utraque propter seipsa. Ac per hoc fiunt duodecim sectæ: per hanc enim rationem singulæ triplicantur. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

† Quocirca duodecim sunt eorum, qui propter se tantummodò unamquamque tenendam putant; at aliæ duodecim eorum, qui non solùm propter se sic vel sic philosophandum esse decernunt; sed etiam propter alios. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

A similar increase will arise from the certainty or the uncertainty attributed to the opinions thus supposed. The Stoics attached an absolute certainty to their maxim, that the proper and only happiness of man was to be found in the honestum. In this therefore they firmly and unalterably persisted, on account of the undeniable truth and security which was supposed to belong to it. Nor were the doctrines of the Old Academy without a similar confidence as to the great object of human life. Speculations concerning God and the soul might be remote and doubtful; but no hesitation was confessed on the ends of good and evil.* On the other hand, the New Academi-

* De bonorum autem, et è contrario malorum finibus negant ullo modo esse dubitandum, et hanc inter se et novos Academicos affirmant esse distantiam. ib. c. 3. This at least is the representation of Antiochus, from whom Varro learnt his philosophy. Augustin observes, that Cicero speaks of him rather as a Stoic than an Old Academician. It appears indeed, that, though nominally of the New Academy, he adopted at pleasure the opinions of other sects, and aimed at the establishment of a Syncretism:—Is aliâ viâ incedendum ratus, non oppugnandas, sed cum Academiâ conciliandas reliquas sectas esse statuit; ideòque Stoïcam sectam in Academiam transtulit, cùm Stoïcum præceptorem habuisset. Unde veteris Academiæ placita re-

clans disclaimed all positive determination on this and other subjects. With them, nothing was certain. Though they still professed the pursuit of truth, if by any means it might be found; yet the utmost assent to which they suffered themselves to be carried, was that which was extorted from them by the force of probability or verisimilitude. They followed truth therefore as if it were real: they held it as only apparent; and supposed that, after the keenest pursuit, the best founded philosophy could pretend to nothing more than the resemblance of truth. Hence it follows, that the twenty-four sects, lately obtained, may be chosen on the first or second of these principles. The maxims of each sect may be regarded as certain, or uncertain: and if twenty-four are of one opinion, twenty-four may be of the other. And thus are forty-eight sects created.*

But another increase will arise from a difference of opinion concerning the philosophic

vocando, conspirare ea cum Stoïcis et Peripateticis censuit. Brucker. Hist. Philos. Per. 1. part. post. lib. ii. c. 6. s. 4. § 7.

* Viginti-quatuor ergo fiunt per eos, qui eas (sectas) velut certas propter veritatem; et aliæ viginti-quatuor, per eos qui easdem, quamvis incertas, propter verisimilitudinem sequendas putant. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

dress, in which the sects may choose to maintain their opinions. The sect, remarkable above all others for its outward appearance, was that of the Cynics. Antisthenes, its founder, was a scholar of Socrates, and had often heard him pour his happy ridicule on the affected finery of the Sophists whom he delighted to expose. But, either misled by the rigour which he imputed to his master, or urged by personal vanity* to a singularity of invention, he struck out a mode of dress at once new and revolting. The pallium alone was his covering;† and that

* Ælian says indeed, that Socrates was displeased with him, and ridiculed his affected rags;—τὸ διερρωγὸς ἱματίε μέρος. lib. ix. c. 35.—It is Laertius who tells the well-known story of Socrates discovering the vanity of Antisthenes through the holes of his pallium; in vit. Antisth.

† The pallium is thus described by Tertullian:—Extrinsecus habitus et ipse quadrangulus; ab utroque laterum regestus, et cervicibus circumstrictus, in fibulæ morsu humeris acquiescebat, (De Pallio, c. 1.) He preferred it to the toga, and wore it on account of its superior ease and convenience;—pallio nihil expeditius, etiam si duplex, quod Cratetis. Mora nusquam vestiendo cùm ponitur: quippe tota molitio ejus operire est solutim. Id ex uno circumjectu licet, equidem nusquam inhumane; ita omnia hominis simul contegit. ib. c. 5.—In this, however, there seems to have been some enthusiasm. It must have required some courage too, on account of the dislike which was shewn to this dress at Carthage. But the pallium had fallen

was squalid. His beard was long; and all the furniture of his person was a pouch, in which he carried his scraps, and a stick, which served the double purpose of supporting his steps, and of bestowing an occasional chastisement on a negligent or refractory hearer. He walked about, a disgustful picture of philosophy turned beggar, and ambition clothed in voluntary wretchedness. No other sect would submit to the use of one loose garment which was to serve the body without the aid of any more clothing. The very Stoics, the solemn imitators of the Cynics, refused to acquiesce in this point. While they aped Antisthenes in the rigour of his doc-

into general discredit before that time. The 71st oration of Dio Chrysostom is employed in inquiring, why the philosophers were followed by mobs who laughed at them, and plucked their pallium, while artisans wearing the dresses of their trades, walked the streets without disturbance. The owl, it seems, was at first followed by the small birds through mere admiration of her wisdom. So was Diogenes by the people. But now nothing remains except the wings, the eyes, and the beak of the philosophical owl, and hence the contempt expressed by the people:—ἡμῶν ἕκαστος τὴν μὲν τολὴν ἔχει τὴν Σωκράτης καὶ Διογένης· τὸ δὲ φρονεῖν, πολλῷ δεόμεν ὅμοιως εἶναι τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐκείνοις, ἢ ζῇν ὁμοίως αὐτοῖς, ἢ λόγους τοιούτους διαλέγεσθαι.—For the dress of Antisthenes, see Brucker, Hist. Philos. Per. 1. part. post. lib. ii. c. 8. § 2.

trine, they revolted from his dress, and added a tunic, which was worn within the pallium.*

* Habitus Cynicorum eò tantùm à reliquorum philosophorum habitu distabat, quòd hi tunicam sub pallio non gestarent; reliqui omnes gestarent. Ideò Juvenalis, qui sectam Cynicam à Stoïcâ parum diversam, quod ad dogmata videret esse, dixit:

——————— Stoïca dogmata tantùm
A Cynicis tunicâ distantia———

quòd Stoïci cum tunicis sub pallio ambularent, Cynici verò ἀχιτῶνες essent. Salmas. in Vit. M. Antonin. Hist. Aug. c. 2. —In a note on the same chapter, Casaubon says: Fuere et propriæ singularum sectarum notæ, propria gestamina. But it is not easy to make them out. The distinguishing marks of the Cynics and Stoics have just been noticed. The Epicureans probably followed the Cyrenaics; and the studied elegance of Aristippus, their leader, is well known;—Cultui corporis et elegantiæ atque decori quàm maxime studebat, says Brucker. The Old Academy, and perhaps the New, preserved, probably for the most part, the manner of Plato, whose dress was grave and unostentatious; for we cannot suppose that the Peripatetics themselves would adopt the extravagancies of Aristotle. Ælian gives an account of the quarrel between him and Plato, which was occasioned in great measure by the important article of the philosophical dress. Aristotle, it seems, was violently inclined to be a coxcomb! His clothes (ἐσθὴς, perhaps the outer and body garment) were affectedly fine. So were his sandals. He cropped his hair, and took a strange pride in wearing a number of rings. He was a great talker; and a great *quizzer* too!—καὶ μωκία δὲ τις ἦν αὐτῷ περὶ τὸ πρόσωπον· καὶ ἄκαιρος ῥωμυλία λαλοῦντος κατηγόρει καὶ αὕτη τὸν τρόπον αὐτῷ, lib. iii. c. 19. If Plato, who disapproved of these manners,

Hence it probably is, that, in this part of his argument, Varro considers the Cynics on one side, and all other philosophers in opposition to them. Those therefore who follow the opinions of the forty-eight sects last obtained, may profess their philosophy in the Cynic habit, or in some dress added to the pallium by the other schools. But if forty-eight are of one opinion, forty-eight may be of another. And thus are formed ninety-six sects.*

There remains another increase; and it is the last. It was a favourite practice with some of the most eminent philosophers to write treatises for the guidance of the public conduct of others; but to choose a life of retirement for themselves. Cicero points out this disposition in Aristotle and Theophrastus; and follows it with no small praise. Each of them had inquired into the true nature and constitution of

indulged some finery about his house, perhaps he drew some excuse from the example of Socrates, who is said to have been somewhat curious about the neatness of his small dwelling, his low couch, and his domestic slippers. ib. lib. iv. c. 11.

* Unamquamque istarum quadraginta-octo sectarum potest quisque sequi habitu cæterorum philosophorum, itémque potest alius habitu Cynicorum. Ex hâc etiam differentiâ duplicantur, et nonaginta-sex fiunt. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

a republic, the duties of those who possessed the highest stations in it, and the particular conjunctures in which the skill of government might best be applied, in order to direct the current of events as circumstances might require. Yet a life spent in quiet, and devoted to contemplative knowledge, was pronounced by both to be most worthy of the man of wisdom. Indeed, it was supposed to have something divine in it, and to approach nearer than any other mode of life, to that of the gods.* It appears therefore, that though some might apply themselves to the administration of public affairs, while they maintained the opinions of their sects; and though some might divide their time between the pursuit of philosophy and the calls of business, (both which cases were sufficiently common,) yet there were

* Cùmque uterque eorum docuisset, qualem in republicâ principem esse conveniret; pluribus prætereà cùm scripsisset, qui esset optimus reipublicæ status: hoc ampliùs Theophrastus, quæ essent in republicâ inclinationes rerum et momenta temporum, quibus esset moderandum utcunque res postularet. Vitæ autem degendæ ratio maximè quidem illis placuit quieta, in contemplatione et cognitione posita rerum; quæ quia Deorum erat vitæ simillima, sapiente visa est dignissima. De Fin. lib. v. c. 4.

others, who, amidst an adherence to their sect, chose to persist in an indulgence of literary retirement and philosophic contemplation. Hence the sects, lately supposed, are capable of being followed in each of the three modes, retirement, activity, or a mixture of both; and consequently, from the multiplication of their sums, or ninety-six by three, is obtained the total sum of two hundred and eighty-eight: and this is the number of sects which it was originally proposed to discover.*

* Denique, quia earum singulas quasque ita tueri homines possunt atque sectari, ut aut otiosam diligant vitam, sicut hi qui tantummodò studiis doctrinæ vacare voluerunt; aut negotiosam, sicut hi, qui cùm philosopharentur, tamen administratione reipublicæ, regendísque rebus humanis occupatissimi fuerunt; aut ex utroque genere temperatam, sicut hi qui partìm erudito otio, partìm necessario negotio, alternantia vitæ suæ tempora tribuerunt; propter has differentias potest etiam triplicari numerus iste sectarum, et ad ducentas, octoginta-octo perduci. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1. After "voluerunt" in the above passage, Augustin adds, "atque valuerunt." This, and other such jingles, would betray him (for he is unhappily fond of these contrivances) even if we had not his own confession, that he has clothed the arguments of Varro in his own language:—Hæc de Varronis libro quantùm potui, brevitèr ac dilucidè posui, sententias ejus meis explicans verbis. ib. This custom was indeed too prevalent among the early Christian writers, and gives to their criticisms a laxity which a just taste must condemn.

But this number, the creature of Varro's fancy, is presently destroyed, with the same facility with which it had been formed. Indeed, he does not apply the same principle of reduction to all the sects thus supposed. Some he treats as having no substantial foundation on which to place a difference of opinion concerning happiness. With the rest he argues as sects legitimately formed. Yet the opinions of these also he proves to be incompetent to the object proposed; and comparing them with his own, he finally establishes the philosophy of the Old Academy, as that which alone would reward the pursuit of a wise man intent on the discovery of the Summum Bonum.

His principle of reduction is drawn from the final purpose of Philosophy. The only worthy and sufficient object for which we philosophize, is happiness. But that which causes happiness, is the end itself of good. It is necessary therefore to the legitimate existence of a philosophical sect, that it pursue some object which it believes to be the very end of good; and it is farther necessary, that this should be separate and distinct from any supposed end of good which is pursued by other sects.* If this fun-

* Neque enim existimat ullam philosophiæ sectam esse di-

damental rule is applied to the increase last obtained, we shall find, that, when the question is only concerning the preference to be given to contemplative retirement, or public activity, or a mixture of both, the principal point is omitted: for here the dispute is not concerning the very end of good, but whether the pursuit of it be facilitated by one of the three modes more than by the others.* Happiness is the end of good; but that which is adopted only as preparative of the end of good, cannot be the end itself. Accordingly, though each of the three modes may be preferred by various persons, all of these will still be obliged to search farther for the end of good, which lies beyond

cendam, quæ non eò distet à cæteris, quòd diversos habeat fines bonorum et malorum; quandoquidem nulla est homini causa philosophandi, nisi ut beatus sit. Quod autem beatum facit, ipse est finis boni. Nulla est igitur causa philosophandi, nisi finis boni. Quamobrem, quæ nullum boni finem sectatur, nulla philosophiæ secta dicenda est. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

* In tribus quoque illis vitæ generibus, uno scilicet non segnitèr, sed in contemplatione vel inquisitione veritatis otioso, altero in gerendis rebus humanis negotioso, tertio ex utroque genere temperato, cùm quæritur quid horum sit potiùs eligendum, non finis boni habet controversiam, sed quid horum trium difficultatem vel facilitatem afferat ad consequendum vel retinendum finem boni; id in istâ quæstione versatur. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 2.

the modes. The difference therefore which has been created by the modes is not sufficiently substantial for the proper foundation of philosophical sects. They are consequently disallowed. The total number loses two-thirds at once, and is reduced to ninety-six.*

If a similar reasoning is employed on the Cynic addition, the result will be similar. For in this case also, the question is not concerning the end itself of good; it applies only to the external appearance of those who pursue it. But a distinction thus unsubstantial can be of no avail towards the attainment of happiness. The habit of Antisthenes must therefore be disregarded: for not only does it not necessarily lead to the final good of man, but it has never had the power of ensuring even an uniformity of opinion concerning it.† The truth is, that philosophic principles, discordant with one another, have frequently been maintained amidst the assumption of the same common habit.

* Nam remoto illo tripertito genere vitæ, duæ partes hujus numeri detrahuntur, et sectæ nonaginta-sex remanent. ib. c. 2.

† Denique fuerunt, qui cùm diversa sequerentur bona finalia, alii virtutem, alii voluptatem; eundem tamen habitum et consuetudinem tenebant, ex quo Cynici appellabantur. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

And on the other hand, the habit has also served to give an outward distinction from other sects, when a genuine difference of opinion could hardly be pleaded.* It follows therefore, that the increase occasioned by the Cynic claims, must also be disallowed. Hence, from the number which lately remained, one half is taken away; and forty-eight sects are left.†

Liable to the same objection is the increase made in favour of the New Academy. For in the dispute between the followers of that school, and other philosophers, the end of good has no place. The question is only, whether the object of pursuit be certain or uncertain, whether it be discoverable by the force of philosophy, and whether man attain the substance, or only the resemblance of truth.‡ But in this case

* Ita illud, quicquid est, unde philosophi Cynici discernuntur à cæteris, ad eligendum ac tenendum bonum, quo beati fierent, utique nil valebat. Nam si aliquid ad hoc interesset, profectò idem habitus eundem finem sequi cogeret, et diversus habitus eundem sequi finem non sineret. ib.

† Remotâ verò differentiâ ex Cynicis additâ, ad dimidium rediguntur, et quadraginta-octo fiunt. ib. c. 2.

‡ Item cùm quæritur de Academicis novis, quibus incerta sunt omnia, utrùm ita sint res habendæ, in quibus philosophandum est, an sicut aliis philosophis placuit, certas eas habere debemus; non quæritur quid in boni fine sectandum sit, sed de

also is a difference of too shadowy a kind to justify the separate establishment of a sect. The nature of the Summum Bonum lies beyond the matter in debate; for all the anxiety of the disputants is wasted on the circumstances of the question, on the apparent, or the actual, existence of good. The pretensions of the New Academicians must therefore be also rejected; and of the number to which we lately fell, one half will be lost. And thus twenty-four sects will remain.*

But these will be liable to a similar reduction; the debate concerning the social life of a philosopher being equally remote from the principal subject, with the academic uncertainty. For neither in this case is the question concerning the end of good; but whether, in the pursuit of it, we shall confine our views to ourselves, or extend them to others.† But a dif-

ipsius boni veritate, quod videtur sectandum, utrùm sit, necne, dubitandum. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. i.

* Conferamus etiam quod ex Academicis novis adhibitum est, rursus dimidia pars remanet, id est, viginti quatuor. ib. c. 2.

† Cùm ergo quæritur de sociali vitâ, utrùm sit tenenda sapienti ut Summum Bonum, quo fit homo beatus, ita velit et curet amici sui, quemadmodum suum, an suæ tantummodò beatitudinis causâ faciat quicquid facit; non de ipso summo

ference concerning the mere participation of good, is not a difference concerning good itself. The increase therefore which was obtained by it, cannot be allowed; and the twenty-four sects must be reduced to twelve.*

Against these, however, the same objection cannot be urged. They have a right to be considered as sects; and there may be patrons of each. Pleasure, a freedom from pain, a conjunction of both, and the primary goods of nature, may be viewed in connection with virtue. Each of the classes may be treated as superior, inferior, or equal to it; and all these opinions will be entitled respectively to the substantial character of philosophy.† In the examination of their merits, therefore, a different method is to be adopted. All the sects professing these opinions being allowed to be genuine, it is in-

bono quæstio est, sed de assumendo, vel non assumendo socio ad hujus participationem boni, propter seipsum, sed propter eundem socium, ut ejus bono ita gaudeat, sicut gaudet suo. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

* De sociali quoque vitâ quod accesserat, similitèr auferatur, et duodecim sunt reliquæ, quas ista differentia, ut viginti-quatuor fierent, duplicaverat. ib. c. 2.

† De his ergo duodecim nihil dici potest, cur sectæ non sint habendæ. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 2.

quired, which has the right of priority; and the palm is given by Varro to that which joins the superiority of virtue with the primary goods of nature. In order to establish this decision, the four original classes are first compared. But three are pronounced incompetent, in comparison of the other; for pleasure is involved in the primary goods of nature; and so is freedom from pain. Nor will the union of both establish the claim of the third class; for this is still exceeded in value by the fourth, which, as has already appeared, comprehends in itself the goods of all the former classes, and brings the beneficial addition of many particulars, which they do not contain.* Here then the objection is made to the first three classes, not as they are considered in their natures, but in their deficiency of provision. They do not extend themselves far enough in the region of good; and

* Ex illis autem quatuor rebus Varro tres tollit, voluptatem scilicet et quietem, et utrumque; non quòd eas improbet, sed quòd primigenia illa naturæ et voluptatem in se habeant et quietem. Quid ergo opus est ex his duabus tria quædam facere, duo scilicet, cùm sigillatìm appetuntur voluptas et quies; et tertium, cùm ambæ simul; quandoquidem primâ naturæ, et ipsas, et præter ipsas, alia multa contineant? Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 2.

the prima naturæ are preferred, because the class which they compose is more comprehensive in its objects, and therefore more largely conducive to the welfare of man. Hence too it appears, that, of the three modes in which the four classes were considered, that is to be preferred which asserts the superiority of virtue. For to subject virtue to either of the classes, is to reverse the order of nature which is established in the constitution of man, and which has been already described. To attribute to her a mere equality with either of them, is to withhold from her that command which is justly due to her superior value. It remains then, that virtue govern the class with which she is connected, and that this be also the class of primary importance.

From all these considerations it follows, that the philosophy which alone is worthy to be pursued by the wise man, terminates in the junction of the fourth class with the first mode; or, in the terms of the argument, that the Summum Bonum consists in the prima naturæ, and the superiority of Virtue. Indeed, it is allowed, that the primary goods of nature, which are thus subjected to virtue, are desirable in the first instance on their own account. But when

they become connected with virtue, which, though of subsequent acquirement, is of prior importance, they fall under her application and control: for Virtue alone is capable of using both itself and all other things for the purposes of happiness.*

Sufficient inquiry has now been made into the nature of the antient systems of philosophy concerning the Summum Bonum; and it appears, how ineffectual were the attempts of reason and genius united, to discover that which Revelation alone can teach, the proper end of our being. For the completion of the subject, therefore, it will be only necessary to add a few observations arising from the doctrines which have been reviewed.

1. Concerning the sect which was first noticed, it may be of importance to remark the involuntary testimony which it bears to a great and standing truth, viz. that in the nature of things, right principles have a genuine ascendency of character, and that Vice itself is compelled to borrow the aid of Virtue for its own

* Omnium autem bonorum vel animi vel corporis, nihil sibi Virtus omninò præponit. Hæc enim bene utitur et seipsa, et cæteris, quæ hominem faciunt beatum, bonis. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 3.

support. The votaries of pleasure dared not to propose their philosophy in its own licentious nakedness. They courted the sanction of something more dignified; and it is well observed by Cicero, that when Torquatus talked of the virtues, and their connection with the Summum Bonum of Epicurus, his voice was raised, and all his gestures shewed his internal feeling of their superior value. The connection however was equally degrading to virtue, and unavailing to Epicurus. While Cato felt, that to join pleasure with virtue was to thrust an harlot into the society of matrons,* he strongly exposed the real and only purpose of such a philosophy, and the insignificance of its end, when compared with the labour employed in the pursuit of it. Epicurus claimed the possession of wisdom; and in the pride of physical inquiry, ranged through the heavens and the earth, the air and the sea, and formed a comprehensive system of nature. But what was the purpose of all this philosophical labour? The attainment of pleasure! Xerxes astonished the world with his

* Quid enim necesse est, tanquam meretricem in matronarum cœtum, sic voluptatem in virtutum concilium adducere? De Fin. lib. ii. c. 4.

warlike preparations. He joined the shores of the Hellespont, and dug through Athos. He walked the seas, and navigated the land. If it had been asked of Xerxes, why he burst upon Greece with so mighty a force? with equal reason might he have answered, to fetch honey from Hymettus!*

2. On the second of these sects we may remark, what errors await virtue itself, when the exercise of it is left to the mere direction of nature! It is the distinguishing excellence of Christianity, that it brings us to God through the acknowledgment of our natural frailty, and teaches a reliance on Heaven through a distrust of ourselves. While it elevates the soul, it lowers the passions. While it dignifies the character, it extinguishes self-opinion, and

* Ut, si Xerxes, cum tantis classibus, tantísque equestribus et pedestribus copiis, Hellesponto juncto, Athone perfosso, maria ambulavisset, terrámque navigâsset, si cum tanto impetu in Græciam venisset, causam ejus quis ex eo quæreret tantarum copiarum tantíque belli, mel se auferre ex Hymetto voluisse diceret, certè sine causâ videretur tanta conatus; sic nos sapientem, pluribus et gravissimis artibus atque virtutibus instructum et ornatum, non, ut illum maria pedibus peragrantem, classibus montes, sed omne cœlum totámque cum universo mari terram mente complexum, voluptatem petere si dicemus, mellis causâ dicemus tanta molitum. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 34.

makes humility the basis of duty. The maxims of the Stoic were indeed superior to those of the Epicurean; but he grew in arrogance as he improved in doctrine. He looked to no superior being, but drew his virtue from the powers of his independent nature. He was completely wise in himself; and, in his own estimation, became his own god.*

3. From the principles of the Old Academy results a conclusion equally revolting, or equally unsatisfactory. The Peripatetic was ready to proclaim with the Stoic, that intelligence and action are the two distinguishing features of man, and that he may be termed a mortal deity.† Varro too, like Epicurus, has ranged through all nature in quest of human happiness, and is equally proud of his discovery. The man possessed of the virtue of his sect is happy in himself, and secure from the stroke of fortune and the mutability of the world.‡ He has also the

* Θείος τε εἶναι· ἔχειν γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς οἱονεὶ θεόν. Laert. in vit. Zenon.

† Hominem ad duas res, ut ait Aristoteles, intelligendum et agendum, esse natum, quasi mortalem Deum. De Fin. lib. ii. c. 13.

‡ Jam non dubitabis, quin earum (virtutum) compotes homines, magno animo erectóque viventes, semper sint beati;

high privilege of being free from all doubt concerning his principles, and from all error.* Whence arises this confidence? It is the boast of the Academic philosophy, that it is not restricted to single points of doctrine, but has a larger and more secure foundation, and embraces both the component parts of our nature. But what is obtained by this junction of the concerns of the soul with the condition of the body? Through the examination which has been made of the opinions of Plato, we have already detected the fallacy of the object to which he directed the hopes of the soul. And, as to Varro, he is in this, as in his former disquisition, utterly silent concerning an existence in a future state. Man, mortal man, is the beginning and the end of his philosophy. To discover the art by which common life may be best conducted, is all his concern,—the object of all his virtue. He never turned his views towards another world for the happiness which he sought. Probably, his sagacity had taught

qui omnes motus fortunæ mutationésque rerum et temporum leves et imbecilles fore intelligant, si in virtutis certamen venerint. De Fin. lib. v. c. 24.

* Eámque sectam sicut dubitatione, ita omni errore carere arbitratur. Civ. Dei, lib. xix. c. 1.

him the emptiness of the fancies of Plato. He formed none for himself; and we must conclude concerning a genius distinguished at Rome by his capacity of research, his depth of penetration, his strong judgment, and extensive learning, that he indulged no hope of immortality, and that to his eyes futurity was "one universal blank."

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